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Protestant home missions to
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Institute of Social and Religious Research

PROTESTANT HOME MISSIONS TO CATHOLIC IMMIGRANTS

THEODORE ABEL

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Protestant Home Missions to Catholic Immigrants

By
THEODORE ABEL

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T. A.

PREFACE

The term "mission work" is usually associated with church enterprises in non-Christian countries designed to propagate the Christian religion; but under the name of Home Mission Work the Protestant churches carry on in the United States religious and social efforts on a large scale. Its general purpose, as defined by the North American Home Missions Congress of 1930, is "to win to Christian discipleship the people of North America and to Christianize the life of our nation." More specifically the task of home missions includes, among others, these objectives:

"1. To make the church available to those sections of the community of America which lack its ministry.
"2. In the case of handicapped or retarded areas or underprivileged groups, to assist in providing those institutions and services which are the necessary elements of a Christian standard of living, to the end that the Christian community life may be developed.
"3. To bring the Christian impulse to bear upon the broad social and civic questions of our day." [1]

In pursuance of these objectives the home-mission enterprise has developed specialized programs for particular types of situations, and various types of population or communities are set off for distinctive treatment. The principal groups so set out are: The Southern Mountaineers, migrant workers, the Negroes, the orientals in the United States, American Indians, the Mormons, the Jewish population, and European

[1] North American Home Missions Congress, *Reports of Commissions, Addresses and Findings,* 1930, p. 67.

immigrants, divided into representatives of the older immigration (Germans and Scandinavians) and of the newer immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, which is largely Catholic.[2]

Of these enterprises the work among Catholic immigrants is of particular interest, for it constitutes the ambitious and dramatic effort on the part of Protestantism to win adherents from among the members of another Christian faith, and represents an aspect of the struggle of Protestantism to retain its religious supremacy in this country. It has special significance also as a social experiment involving an attempt at cultural interpenetration and the changing of attitudes and allegiances by an organized effort. Furthermore, it is an example of the resolution of the Protestant churches in America to take an active part in the solution of social problems; for the work among Catholic immigrants is carried on with the aim of promoting Americanization and breaking down the isolation of immigrants from American society by bringing them into the fellowship of the Protestant church.

The interest and significance that attach themselves to Protestant mission work among Catholic immigrants by virtue of these facts should be sufficient justification for undertaking its study. So far as we know, this aspect of the home-mission enterprise has not heretofore received comprehensive treatment. An added reason for undertaking this task at the present time is the fact that many ecclesiastical leaders, as well as many laymen, have in recent years been raising again the question of the wisdom and legitimacy of this entire realm of effort. What has the missionary enterprise among the foreign populations accomplished? To what extent have the hoped-for results been realized? What should the future policy with regard to this enterprise be? These and similar questions have become timely in view of the restriction of immigration,

[2] *Data Book,* North American Home Missions Congress, Vol. II, pp. 6-8.

the high aggregate cost of the work, the changing attitude toward proselyting, and a growing tendency toward a more deliberate and systematic planning of the church program which required first of all a taking account of stock.

The purpose of this book is to describe the nature and scope, to analyze the results, and to discuss the problems, of Protestant home-mission work among Catholic immigrants.

The term "mission work," as used here, refers to the activities of ministers, missionaries and social workers appointed by local or national boards of Protestant denominations in this country to conduct religious, educational, recreational and general service programs for Catholic immigrants and their children. These programs are carried on in special centers, which are organized, manned, and financed by the denominations. These centers are located in regions where large numbers of foreign-born congregate, i.e., in the cities of the East, the Middle West and the Pacific Coast, and in mining regions. Over one thousand centers are in operation to-day, nearly 80 per cent of which are under the auspices of the Presbyterian (U. S. A.), Baptist (North) and Methodist Episcopal denominations. Most of these centers are churches which serve congregations of various national groups, among whom the Italians, Mexicans, Czechs and Hungarians predominate. About 15 per cent of the centers are institutions fashioned after the pattern of the social settlement and the Y. M. C. A.

This study of the mission enterprise among Catholic immigrants was made under the auspices of the Institute of Social and Religious Research. The field work involved an intensive investigation of one hundred and fifty mission centers and extended over a period of a year and a half. The centers that were studied include churches as well as the various institutions which, in addition to religious work, also carry on a social program—such institutions as neighborhood houses, Christian centers, and so forth.

Since most of the missionary work among foreign popula-

tions is concentrated in the cities, the main part of the field work was carried out in the larger cities, particularly in New York, Cleveland, Chicago and Los Angeles, where the churches are most active and where all types of mission work are found. A number of centers in Buffalo, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Denver and San Francisco were also studied. For purposes of comparison and supplementation the investigation included centers in rural districts and small towns of Colorado, California and eastern New York, as well as centers located in mining regions such as the coal fields of Pennsylvania and the Iron Range of Michigan.

Since the most extensive work among immigrants is done by the Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists, 80 per cent of the mission centers that were investigated belong to these denominations. The remaining centers were Episcopalian, Congregational, Free Methodist, Evangelical Christian and Pentecostal.

Most of the mission centers that were investigated are carrying on their work among the Czechs, Hungarians, Italians, Poles and Mexicans. A small number of centers for mission work among the Russians, Ukranians and Croatians were also included in the study.

The field work consisted in the accumulation of data by the following means:

1. Interviews with the workers at the mission centers, with members and participants, and with individuals living in the communities in which the centers operate.

2. Especially prepared schedules pertaining to data on the constitution and composition of the centers, on their activities, and on the chief characteristics of their membership—such as age, length of residence in the United States, occupation, education, religion of parents and so forth.

3. Observation of the activities at various centers.

4. Reviews of the available literature—books, pamphlets, circulars, etc.

5. A prize contest for the best-written life-history by mission workers and converts, which yielded ten well-sized autobiographies and twelve shorter descriptions.

The analysis of the results of the investigation attempted in this book deals only with the broader issues of the work among Catholic immigrants which the data have revealed. No consideration has been given to individual mission centers, nor has a discussion of problems of administration and methods of conducting the work been attempted. Instead, emphasis is put upon a general description of the work, its implications, and the underlying factors that determine the results.

The first chapter discusses the purposes of the mission enterprise. This is followed by a discussion of the approach toward the realization of these purposes, first, through formal church work and secondly, through social work. A special chapter discusses the question of leadership and finance. The concluding chapter embodies a general summary of the study and discusses the future tendencies and prospects of the enterprise.

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PART I

CHAPTER I

The Aims of Mission Work Among Catholic Immigrants

The home-mission work of Protestant churches among immigrants is undoubtedly an expression of the same aggressive missionary spirit that has led these churches to promote their extensive and energetic missionary enterprises all over the world. The aim to extend the realm of Protestantism through the inclusion of the immigrant in the drive for new converts can, therefore, be regarded as the general objective of the mission work among immigrants; but the immediate purpose that furnished the incentive for the realization of this objective was of a social rather than a religious nature.

Americanization through Evangelization

Like other American institutions, the churches were responsive to the acute problem created by the influx of immigrants whose cultural background made their assimilation difficult. It was the intention of sharing in the solution of this problem that primarily prompted the American Protestant churches to enter the field of immigrant work. In this intention they were encouraged by the belief that they had at their disposal a most effective approach through evangelization, which promised the quickest and most adequate solution if employed on a large enough scale.

This belief had its source in the social philosophy of American Protestantism, according to which there exists a vital and determining link between the spirit of evangelical Protestantism and the ideals of American institutions and ways of living. According to this view the best American citizen is the

one who is most thoroughly imbued with the ideas of Protestant Christianity and who, through his membership in a Protestant church, stays under the influence of "the most constructive" element in the community. The most effective way, then, to make good Americans of the foreign-born and their descendants is to draw them into the membership of Protestant churches. This position is clearly illustrated by the following statement of a prominent church leader:

"If we would have our country hold to the traditions of the past which constitute its greatest source of wealth, no long statement is required to emphasize the imperative need for the training of these foreigners in the principles underlying our constitution and government. Enumerated and traced to their source, these principles rest upon the interpretation given by Protestant Christians to the Word of God. Hence, when incoming ships bring from other shores people speaking our language and holding the faith of our fathers, America need fear no disintegrating influence. But there come those of an alien tongue clinging to the religion and customs of another fatherland. . . . If our land is to preserve the integrity of its ideals let no time be lost in giving to these strangers both the church and the school."

The belief in evangelization as the most adequate method of Americanization imbued the American churches with a sense of the importance of an undertaking in which evangelization, for the first time in the history of the church, was to be not only an end in itself, but a means for the accomplishment of a social goal affecting vitally the welfare of American society. The published utterances of the leaders of the movement give abundant evidence to support the contention that the slogan, "Americanization through Evangelization," was the inspiration of the mission enterprise among New Americans.

"Our great problem," says a report of the Commission on Presbyterian Missions, "is to assimilate immigrants into our American life, to make them one with us in our attitude

toward free government, the church, and our established institutions. We believe . . . there is only one solution—that is the Gospel."

In a report of the American Baptist Home Mission Society we read that "the aim of missions is spiritual. Every project in which the society is interested, whether singly or coöperatively, is evangelistic in its aim. 'North America for Christ' still remains the great ideal of the society." After thus affirming loyalty to the original purpose of the churches, emphasis is put on the fact that the Baptist church, while pursuing its calling, at the same time performs an important social duty. The statement is made that "the duty of evangelizing our foreign population is one of increasing urgency. To leave them unevangelized is to court peril. The menace of immigration can be dispelled only by accepting our mission to the immigrant and the peril averted only by fulfilling the possibilities of that mission."

The social duty performed by the mission enterprise among immigrants is emphasized over and over again in the annual reports of the churches. The following quotation from the report of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions may be regarded as a characteristic expression of this attitude: "The coal fields have drawn great numbers of foreigners who come to seek material wealth. But they bring with them their political, social and religious ideas, fostered by generations of oppression and repression. The most sacred considerations of human life, patriotism, social welfare, as well as loyalty to Christ demand their evangelization."

The recognition of the fact that a social purpose animated the mission enterprise among immigrants has an important consequence. There can be no doubt that the churches responded as eagerly as they did to the slogan of "Americanization through Evangelization" because it offered an opportunity to promote the expansion of the church. This identification of Americanization with evangelization—the

sure conviction that "if an immigrant is made a thoroughgoing Christian his Americanization will take care of itself" —made it possible for the churches to maintain a social aim and at the same time to keep their religious objective in sight. Thus, although the social purpose may be inseparably connected with a religious motive, in so far as that purpose represents an attempt to assimilate vast masses of immigrants by bringing them under the influence of the Protestant church, the mission work among immigrants can be viewed as a social experiment regardless of the presence of a purely religious motive. So considered, its success or failure may be appraised, as may the success or failure of any other social enterprise. Where the saving of souls is the exclusive goal it may legitimately be argued that the objective measurement of results in social terms is out of place, because the salvation of one soul justifies any effort made on its behalf; but where a deliberate attempt is made by the churches to change social conditions, and not only "individual souls," this argument ceases to have force. The goal of "Americanization through Evangelization" carries its own criteria of adequacy. Has the efficacy of evangelization as a means of Americanization been demonstrated? Have the churches fared better than other institutions in Americanizing immigrants? To what extent have the churches succeeded in this enterprise? These are questions which can be asked about the evangelistic work of the churches once evangelization is regarded as a means toward an end and not as an end itself.

Opposition to the Roman Catholic Church

While the assimilation of immigrants has been the prime motive in launching the mission work among them, hardly less important has been the purpose, implicit in the social philosophy of American Protestantism, to maintain the dominant position of the Protestant church in American civilization.

It is characteristic of most social movements that they not only aim at achieving something, but that they are also opposed to something. The desire to safeguard the supremacy of Protestantism in the religious life of the country introduces almost inevitably an element of opposition into the work of the Protestant churches among immigrants. The available missionary literature and the statements of leaders interviewed in the course of this study leave no doubt as to the nature of that opposition. They clearly show that the mission work among immigrants was not only inspired by the desire to Americanize, but was also sustained by opposition to the Catholic church.

"There is an irrepressible conflict between two conceptions of Christianity. We grant . . . choice, but we also claim the right to bear witness to the conception which we believe to be the Gospel of the Grace of God. On the one hand there is a religion of autocracy and aristocracy with sensuous forms which appeal to the imagination and to superstitions which hold men in their power. It has numbered among its adherents saints and martyrs . . . but it has fostered persecution . . . and where it rules, liberty is denied and ignorance and illiteracy reach their highest rate. On the other hand where evangelical Christianity has been spiritual and vital, in place of autocracy has reigned religious liberty; instead of aristocracy, religious democracy; and in the place of formalism and superstition, the Open Word of God which has everywhere been the Magna Charta of civil and social progress." [1]

The same thought is expressed in a report of the New Mexico Spanish-speaking Conference, but with reference to the local situation in the Southwest:

"In our beloved homeland two great forces are at work. The battle is on. The recent evidence of the arrogance of Rome has but served to confirm his faithful witnesses to the truth. This is our problem in the great South West: if it be true that our

[1] Brooks, C. A. *Through the Second Gate*, 1922, pp. 10-11.

Methodism represents the spirit of progress, civil and ecclesiastical rights, the very spirit of Christ, while Jesuitism is a menace to these, then it behooves us to see that the precious doctrines of Methodism shall be incorporated into the lives of all people under our flag. We owe it to our families, our friends, our neighbors."

The unminced words with which the Catholic church is at times described as superstitious, tyrannical, worldly, are merely characteristic of the familiar methods employed by a group when it is fighting another group where little significance is attached to exaggeration and misrepresentations. The real issue, as far as the Protestant churches are concerned, is not so much the alleged inadequacy of the Catholic church as the concern for their own position in American life, which is thought to be threatened by the influx of large masses of Catholics. "If we do not remake these New Americans and make them conform to our standards, they will certainly remake us. If we do not inspire them with our ideals they will degrade us with their ideals. . . . The church of to-day must now give the Gospel to the citizens of to-morrow." [2]

The attitude of opposition to the Catholic church as an incentive to missionary activities was strongest in the earlier phases of immigrant work. Expressions like those quoted above, which stamp evangelization as being definitely an attempt at proselyting, are rarely found in the propaganda literature of to-day. The open intention to proselyte, however, prevails in many quarters, particularly in small-town churches and among the older ministers. "I freely and gladly admit that I am proselyting my Catholic brethren," said an Italian minister, "if I were not to proselyte I should have no reason to stay in the ministry. What else can I do when I live in the faith that we have the truth? It is my duty to make the Catholics better Christians by preaching the straight Gospel to them." While many ministers abstain from attack-

[2] Padelford, F. W. *The Commonwealth and the Kingdom*, p. 148.

ing the Catholic church, others still make an attack upon it a frequent subject of their sermons. "If I have any adherents it is because I persist in pointing out the fallacies of the Roman church," was the statement of a Mexican minister with one of the largest congregations in the Spanish-speaking work. "I confront the beliefs of the Catholics with the statements of the Gospel and prove that our religion is right. My people are bound in superstition and sin and must be set free by our glorious faith." In the office of a leading missionary in the Southwest stands a glass case containing various objects carefully labeled. There are a package of cigarettes and a pack of cards with the note, "surrendered after conversion," but there are also statues of the Virgin Mary and rosaries with labels expressing joyfulness about successful attempts at proselyting, such as "abandoned by a former idol worshipper who turned to the light."

Proselyting sometimes is carried on even when there is opposition to it. "We must not use the word 'proselyte' but that is what we are really doing," said a leading church worker in an address before a group of home missionaries. The workers at a New York mission stated that their leader was opposed to proselyting but that it was the very thing expected of them and that was what they were doing. Whenever, in the course of many interviews, the statement was made by a minister that his mission was to try to make the immigrant religious-minded and not to proselyte, the question, "would you care to make better Catholics of them?" invariably caused an unfavorable reaction.

In a strict sense, the word "proselyting" should be applied only to activities which arise out of opposition to another faith and which aim to win its believers over to the faith of the proselyter. While such direct and frank proselyting activities persist they have lost a great deal of their vigor in recent years. Among the leaders of the movement, particularly the representatives of the various home-mission boards, a broader

attitude of tolerance prevails, and proselyting is frowned upon. A better understanding of Catholicism and of the nature of religion in general, as well as recognition of the fallacy of an argument that sees in immigration an imminent threat to Protestantism, are in part responsible for the change. There is more concern to-day about the preservation of religious life in America than about the particular denominational form in which it may express itself. Also, the introduction of an extensive social program, with many activities that have only a remote connection with formal church work, has led to a redefinition of purpose in which "character-building" has taken the place of "proselyting." As long, however, as work among immigrants remains *mission* work, the greatest tolerance and the strongest opposition to proselyting will not eradicate the tendency to consider "joining the church" the crowning test of success. This is true even in cases where the avowed intention is to exert merely a spiritual and moral influence upon the immigrant.

This tendency cannot, however, be characterized as proselyting in the strict sense of the word, for the attempt to win members for the church may be directed only at those individuals who have already given up their allegiance to the church of their ancestors or who have become indifferent to it. "Folk-catholicism is found inadequate by the individual who moves into a new environment; Protestant missions gather up the bewildered, those who are lost, and those who are actively striving to find a better way of living." "The churches are after the religious indifferent, those immigrants who retain a nominal allegiance to their old-world faith but have lost all touch with vital religion." Expressions like these, which are the current justification for evangelization work, can hardly be said to indicate opposition to the Catholic church, unless the fact that evangelization does not aim to restore an individual to his former faith is to be so interpreted. On the other hand, the activities comprising the mis-

sion enterprise among immigrants—although they vary from the provision of milk for infants to the preaching of eternal damnation—will always be carried on in the conviction that the Protestant church has a "message of glad tidings" capable of transforming the individual. In this broader sense the mission work of the Protestant churches will always be "proselyting."

The Social Program and Its Relation to Evangelization

We have found that the mission work among New Americans is motivated by the general objective of evangelizing the immigrants with the twofold purpose of promoting their Americanization and of strengthening the position of the Protestant church in this country.

Evangelization has a religious implication. But the Protestant home missions carry on an extensive social program. They are sponsoring centers that offer educational and recreational opportunities, and engage in other activities that do not imply a strictly religious aim. The question, therefore, arises as to the relation of the social program to the general objective of evangelization. Is the social program consistent with the main purpose of mission work, or does it imply that the churches are promoting a new objective which is non-religious in character?

We find that the social program, as carried by most of the social centers conducted under home-mission and church auspices, aims primarily to serve the interest of the church and to be a means of winning new members, while at the same time promoting character-building and the bettering of social relationships. In some centers character-building and the improvement of social relationships are put forth as the exclusive goals, on the theory that they are worthy of church support for their own sake regardless of whether or not new members are won.

Promotion of Church-membership

The centers that utilize the social program for the promotion of church-membership act, of course, in conformity with the general aim of mission work, which is evangelization; for here the social program is mainly another method of obtaining contacts with immigrants, particularly those of the second generation, by means of which they may be influenced to join the church.

The effort to win new members by means of the social program is most pronounced in the institutional churches. The principal motive in the nursery and the kindergarten, where the children learn to sing hymns and memorize Bible stories, is to induce a receptive attitude toward Protestantism. "We must carry on educational work among those where little can be done at first by preaching the Word," says a report of a women's home-mission board; "the way must be prepared for the minister and the church by getting hold of the children. This is done by the missionary teacher." Participation in sports and home-craft activities is made conditional upon attendance at Sunday school, Bible classes, or religious discussion groups. A baseball game or the opening of a swimming pool is often preceded by a religious talk. Special favors are given to those who attend religious meetings regularly. The opportunity is taken at "community nights" to convey a religious message or to extend an invitation to church services.

The Christian center is equally inspired by a strictly religious purpose, and is greatly interested in the winning of new members. The following definition of the objective of the Christian center was adopted at a conference in Buffalo in 1922: "The purpose of the Christian center is to interpret the Gospel by teaching and service so as to make for Jesus Christ a commanding place in the life of the individual, the

family, and the community; in other words the regeneration of every life and of all life." In defining the principles that should control the formulation of the program the conference pointed out, "that human needs ought to be ministered to; that activities have value as they promote vital personal contacts with Christian workers; that workers should seek to bring all converts into church-membership upon confession of faith and, finally, that a proper proportion or balance should be maintained between recreational, educational and religious expressions with an unmistakable emphasis upon the religious, and each group should be followed through until every individual is under direct Christian teaching and influence." A still more direct formulation of a religious goal is found in a circular of one of the Christian centers; "It is our aim to have a definite part of every evening used in Bible study or devotional talks. The claims of Jesus as Saviour are presented at frequent intervals. The position of the Baptist in matters of faith and doctrine is stated to the boys." It was found that even the clinic and dispensary were utilized for the promotion of religious aims—religious tracts, gospels, and testaments, for example, being distributed to those waiting to be served.

In the Neighborhood House the purpose of winning church members is less emphasized, but it is frequently present in the religious activities, such as Bible classes and the religious discussion groups that are carried on. A report of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. defines the Neighborhood House as "Christian, social and educational work carried on in a building specially erected for its use, with a staff of workers consecrated to the Christian purpose and a program of group activities, meetings . . . organized democratically and coöperatively in response to the neighborhood needs," and the report goes on to say that this includes "opportunity for specific religious exercises and instruction." In another report the House is defined as

an attempt to reach people through service who cannot be reached by the churches. A circular of a national board, discussing its work among immigrants, states: "The Neighborhood House was frankly patterned after the social settlement. It has been less hesitant to avow itself definitely and specifically religious. The Neighborhood House is an outreached arm of the church. . . . The second generation is undoubtedly the great challenge. Will these young people of foreign parentage find their way into our established English-speaking churches? The Christian Neighborhood House with its interest in youth, sharing its unrest and aspirations, is hopefully prepared for this very hour."

In the conduct of religious activities no direct attempts may be made to suggest the desirability of joining the church. That a religious program may nevertheless be promoted is indicated by the following quotation from the circular of a Neighborhood House in the Middle West: "If Hull House fears to introduce religion in its program our House proves how needless the fears are, that you can have a community institution shot through and through with religious education and Christian character and yet appeal to the whole community and serve all the people." The leader of a community center, who prides himself on being without a religious program, was asked what he considered the most important phase of his work. He replied: "Undoubtedly the personal contacts which I have with the boys and girls who come to the House. Do you know that three of the youngsters whom I helped and advised have joined our church? They did it of their own free will."

Thus the social centers, under the leadership of persons appointed by the church or occupying church positions, continue to serve the church's interests, and in their annual reports appear such items as "Sunday school formed," "church group in House established," "individual lives transformed," "confessions of faith obtained."

Character-building and the Improvement of Social Relationships

We have mentioned the fact that in some centers the intention of promoting church-membership by carrying on a social program is disavowed. In these centers character-building through teaching the children of immigrants the principles of Christian ethics by example and instruction, and through the development of a sense of fair play and coöperation in games and other group activities, is held to be worth pursuing for its own sake. For it is believed that character-building "stimulates greater interest in those spiritual and social values which are indispensible for the growth of a Christian community." The improvement of social relationships is frequently set forth by the leaders of these centers as another aim worthy in itself of church support.

"I am not interested in conversions or in building up a church," said the leader of a Neighborhood House in northern New York; "I think that if I have succeeded in developing hatred for war and eliminated racial prejudice I have fulfilled my mission." From another quarter comes the statement: "The polyglot community in which we work furnishes us with an excellent opportunity of bringing the members of different nationalities and races together in coöperative activities. If we can achieve a better understanding among them I think that the church is fulfilling a mission which is at least as important as the conversion of immigrants." The social interpretation of Christianity has undoubtedly furnished the support for these views, and ideals of "world friendship" and "world peace" are deemed worthy goals of mission work among immigrants because they promote a Christian social order.

It is with regard to the policy of social centers which do not aim at winning new adherents to the church that the question as to whether the promotion of a social program does

or does not imply a new objective of mission work becomes pertinent.

Does the objective of character-building and the improvement of human relationships, if taken as the exclusive goal, represent a significant departure from the purpose of evangelization?

On this question leaders of the movement hold conflicting and ambiguous views. "I find that our workers are at a total loss when it comes to defining the relation between social and religious work," said one of them; "they have no clear conception of what Christianity means, whether social and religious are synonymous, where the social begins and the religious leaves off, or how the two are united in a program of activities. Their convictions are often carried more by emotions than by logic." There is some truth in this statement. But if the expressions of conflicting opinions are disregarded and attention is centered upon the methods by which character-building and the improvement of relationships are pursued, a strict consistency with the general policy of evangelization can easily be seen. The two principal methods employed are personal contact and religious education. Through contact with workers who are consecrated and loyal to the faith and ideals of Protestant Christianity, it is believed that the individual immigrant may be led to emulate the character and conduct of the worker and thus accept his attitude toward life. By means of religious education, through Bible classes and discussion groups, the social center seeks to give to the immigrant a systematic presentation of the fundamental principles of the Protestant faith, thus arriving, by a collective approach, at the same goal as that reached through personal contact, namely the development of the qualities that characterize a Protestant Christian.

The underlying principle of each method is the belief that the highest character and the most desirable attitude toward others can be achieved only by developing in an individual

an appreciation for, and an acceptance of, the fundamental beliefs of evangelical Christianity. While an individual may not actually be urged to join the church, he is subjected to religious influences designed to inculcate the qualities that a church-member is expected to possess, and there is frequently perceptible the underlying hope that if an individual is made to act and think as if he were a church-member he will eventually join the church. But irrespective of whether this hope is consciously entertained or not—and some leaders disclaim it—the social program must be regarded as another method of accomplishing the evangelization of the Catholic immigrants and their descendants, since its aims are character-building and the improvement of social relationships by means of a religious attitude and an outlook upon life which conforms to the ideas of Protestantism. The social program does not imply a new objective or project a "social" mission as distinguished from a religious mission.

On this point the following quotation is illuminating:

"The dominant ideal, then, of home missions is to inspire the spiritual life of America with the dynamic of the Christian Gospel. This is our supreme and never-changing task. This was the goal of the earliest home missionaries. It is our goal today. If ever we lose sight of it we shall lose our way. Home missions do not exist primarily to teach children to read and write; nor to set up hospitals and establish clinics, however worthy such humanitarian service may be; nor to train immigrants to be good American citizens, though such is frequently one of their by-products. Home missions is not another name for social service. It signifies a specialty. It centers its attention upon a supreme purpose to reach the souls of men and lift them up to God.

"This does not mean that we are limited in our activities to the sermon and the pastoral call; that we have no use for mission schools or hospitals; that social service has no place in our program. But it does signify that these are only means to a greater end. Just as a local self-supporting church may, in the absence

of such equipment in high schools or Y. M. C. A., be able to justify the expense of a gymnasium, swimming pool or bowling alley as a part of its plant, so home missions may set up schools when the government lags, or minister to diseased bodies when the usual medical and surgical services are not available, or put on programs of rural education when there are no county agents to do it. But this sort of thing is not our first business, nor can our deepest urge be satisfied with it. Only as we endeavor in every Boy Scout hike, in every summer assembly, in every school lesson and physician's call to minister by these agencies to the souls of our people shall we be true to our high calling.

"It follows that our entire personnel should be chosen with particular attention, not only to Christian character, but to spiritual zeal. There is no room for a non-religious man in mission schools any more than in mission pulpits. Physicians and nurses who do not look beyond the physical needs of their patients to their soul health are out of place in mission hospitals. Our administrative officials, our treasurers, even our office secretaries, clerks and stenographers may well be selected not alone for talent and training, but for their interest in the evangelization of America and their ability to look beyond immediate routine, beyond ledger and invested funds and typewriter, beyond committee meetings and programs and budgets, beyond the building of churches and the filling of vacant pulpits to the souls of the people. Are we reaching them and lifting them up to God? That is the great question." [3]

With the foregoing brief analysis of the aims of home-mission work among immigrants as a background, we shall next attempt to set forth the main features of the enterprise, discussing first the approach through formal church work, such as the establishment of congregations and Sunday schools and the employment of the method of conversion. In a later chapter we shall consider the approach through the

[3] North American Home Missions Congress, *Reports of Commissions, Addresses and Findings,* 1930, pp. 4-5.

social program. The two types of approach have developed chronologically, so that we can divide mission work roughly into two periods, the first from about 1880 to 1905, in which formal church work predominated, and the second from 1905 up to the present, which is characterized by an increasing emphasis on the social program.

CHAPTER II

Formal Church Work

Types of Organization

The formal church work of the mission enterprise among Catholic immigrants is handled by three types of organization:

1. *The Mission*

This is usually located in rented rooms in the heart of a district inhabited by foreign-born. It is an unstable form because of the absence of an organized congregation and because of frequent changes of locality. The Gospel is preached usually with a strong fundamentalist emphasis, and for the most part to chance assemblies, with a street meeting preceding the gathering. The mission is often the outpost of some church or home-mission board with an appointed missionary, or it may be an independent enterprise carried on by an immigrant convert among his people. As a type, it was prevalent in the early period of immigrant work and is now rapidly disappearing. It has never been successful except in cases where it served as the starting point for the organization of a church.

2. *The Foreign-language Church*

Here is found an organized congregation of members of the same nationality, with a permanent pastor. Its activities follow the prevailing pattern of church work. It has a separate building, regular Sunday services in the language of the congregation, a Sunday school for adults and the children of church-members, prayer meetings, girls' and boys' clubs,

Ladies' Aid, mothers' club and Christian Endeavor or the Epworth League. Practically without exception the foreign-language churches are under the supervision of a denominational board and derive their support from it. Less than half a dozen such churches have ever been known to be self-supporting. This is largely due to the fact that the congregations of the foreign-language churches are small as compared with those of the average American church.

In the churches surveyed in the course of this study the attendance ranges from a handful to a little more than a hundred, with an average of approximately fifty for each service. The average Sunday-school attendance is somewhat larger, especially in places where adults as well as children participate. Most foreign-language churches are meagrely equipped; they are housed in old, unattractive buildings with small, dark rooms and bleak halls, and often are in a dilapidated condition because of neglected repairs. Structures that approach some standard of beauty in architecture and some adequacy of equipment, like the Plaza Church in Los Angeles, and the Church of the Ascension (Italian) in New York, are rare. Unable to erect new buildings, many immigrant congregations have had to be satisfied with any available structure, usually a building abandoned by an American congregation.

The foreign-language church as here described was the predominant form through which mission work among immigrants was carried on in the first period. Many of the centers still survive, but are gradually being replaced by, or transformed into, institutional churches.

3. *The Foreign-language Department of an American Church*

This type includes a congregation of one or more nationalities organized, supervised and supported by an American church as part of its missionary activities. The department

has its own pastor and utilizes the facilities of the American church to carry out its activities. The number of department churches is much smaller than might be expected in view of the fact that many American churches are located in or near immigrant districts. Only one out of ten avails itself of the opportunity to expand into the field of immigrant work. The conservatism and the desire for exclusiveness that characterize the average American church are reported to be largely responsible for this lack of initiative. The department church recommends itself in more than one way as the most adequate type of church organization among immigrants. It retains the advantage of stability that the foreign-language church has over the mission, but it is less expensive and has a more adequate equipment at its command. It can be reorganized more easily in response to changing conditions, particularly those that arise from the demand of the native-born of foreign parentage for English services. It is probable that the department church will become more prevalent in the near future. The restriction of immigration, and the rise of a generation of descendants of foreign-born who want to be Americans have induced many leaders to propound the policy of gradually transferring the congregations of the stagnating foreign-language churches to some American church. They believe that only thus can they conserve results attained which are threatened by the inevitable disintegration of the foreign-language church.

These three types, the mission, the foreign-language church and the department church, are the main forms through which the religious work of the mission enterprise among immigrants is carried on. Their characterization has of necessity been brief, for we are here concerned, not with the organizational aspects of the mission work, but with its characteristic feature as an experiment in social control. The relevant aspect in this connection is the work of evangelization which expresses itself in the drive for converts and in the attempt to

mold and recondition individual behavior. How, then, are the mission, the foreign-language church and the department church proceeding to build up memberships?

How a Mission Enterprise Starts

We have already mentioned the fact that the starting of a mission enterprise in a given locality is due to the initiative of self-appointed missionaries or of workers sent out by a church or denominational board to organize a center in some immigrant colony. A particular locality is selected because it contains factors that promise a chance of success, such as the recent arrival of an immigrant group that has not yet organized its own church, or the presence of some Protestants among the immigrants. Most mission enterprises start with a small nucleus of individuals who for various reasons are ready to respond favorably to the appeal of the missionary. These individuals may have been converted abroad, or may belong to Protestant groups, such as the Waldensians among the Italians, the Hussites among the Czechs, and the Reformed among the Hungarians. They may have been converted in this country, in some other locality, or they may have become dissatisfied with their own church and willing to embrace a new faith. Whatever the case may be, the mission worker is usually able to begin with a handful of followers who with zeal and enthusiasm help him in the promotion of his work. But his main task is yet before him. The vast majority of the immigrants that constitute his charge are indifferent, suspicious, and often hostile. He has to arouse their interest, win their goodwill and establish such contacts as will enable him to influence them and to evoke in them a desire to join his mission.

Methods of Winning Members

In gaining members the missionary engaged in formal church work employs two approaches: He will try to reach

people by a general appeal in the hope that by chance someone who hears his message may be won over or be induced to come to his mission center, or he will try to make contacts with particular individuals with the intention of cultivating their acquaintance and eventually converting them.

The General Appeal

The methods most commonly used in a general appeal in the mission work among immigrants are:

1. The street meeting.
2. The house-to-house canvass.
3. The revival meeting.
4. The distribution of tracts and Bibles.

The first three methods are most frequently employed in the beginning of a mission enterprise, but are also used by organized churches when they conduct campaigns for new members. The fourth method is continuously used and thousands of tracts and Bibles are distributed monthly by the various mission organizations and by special colporteurs. None of these methods has yielded positive results of any significance.

Numerous accounts of *street meetings* were collected for this study. It was found that in many cases the meeting ended by an angry crowd throwing missiles at the missionary after heckling and other annoyances had proved ineffective in breaking it up. In cases where the meeting went on without interruption it was a rare occasion indeed when an individual responded by establishing closer contacts with the missionary. Among one hundred members of immigrant church organizations who were interviewed, none was found to have been impelled to join because of a street meeting. The average foreign-born individual, unaccustomed to the aggressive ways of American churches, considers the dragging of religious functions into the street as a sacrilege and this makes it unlikely that he will respond favorably to the exhortations of

the missionary but rather tends to incite him to opposition.

The *house-to-house canvass* is also the source of considerable ill will, for it takes people unawares with its unexpected appeal. The number of those that are won by this method is equally insignificant. The missionaries that have had experience with the canvass method freely admit its inadequacy. "I just received a letter from headquarters," said a minister in the course of an interview, "in which I am urged to start a house-to-house visitation of immigrant homes. This is perfectly ridiculous. They do not understand that I'd be chased away with brooms, as I have been before, the minute the people learn who I am." A woman missionary states: "Canvassing is bad. People begin to suspect and fear you. They know me in the community now, so they do not treat me as roughly as they used to, but before I have a chance to say much they forestall my intention with some such statement as, 'We don't need anything. We are Catholics. We are happy.' I worked for a mission board for ten years. Many times I was asked to make canvasses when our membership fell low. I did it because I was paid for it and ordered to do it, but not because it was right or effective."

From the *revival meeting* no satisfactory results are reported. The average immigrant looks at these meetings as a sort of entertainment and attends them out of curiosity. Since he is not familiar with the terms of Protestant theology, they do not stir up in him the emotions which would make him receptive to the exhortations of the missionary. The method has a further disadvantage in that it requires a public announcement, and therefore permits antagonistic parties to issue a warning and to stimulate feelings of opposition that have broken up many a revival meeting.

The extensive use of the *distribution of tracts and Bibles* is based upon the widespread belief that it is sufficient for a person to read the Bible for himself and to acquaint himself

with the exposition of some religious thought in order to see the light and earnestly turn his mind to conversion. The evidence supporting this belief is very scanty. Cases are reported where someone who by chance obtained a Bible or a tract came to a missionary for further enlightenment and became converted, or where an individual under the influence of Bible-reading radically changed his mode of living. But as an investigator goes out to collect such cases he soon finds that the same story is repeated over and over again and that it is difficult to obtain more than a score of cases that are authentic. The conclusion is unavoidable that only in exceptional instances does the distribution of religious literature have the desired effect, and that a few star cases are generalized upon to support a belief that is based upon a theological assumption and not derived from evidence.

The statement of a colporteur with twenty years of field experience among Mexican and Italian immigrants in Colorado is relevant to this point and also is typical of the many comments received from those who are employing this method. "I sow the seed and I shall continue to do so, for this is the Master's command. But most of it falls upon barren ground. People usually accept willingly my offering of a Bible or a tract. But seldom does anybody come to me for further information. I have had only a few baptisms as a result of my work. It often happens that when I come to a house and ask whether a Bible is desired I get a proud answer, 'We already have one.' When I ask to see it, they have to blow off a few inches of dust before they can hand it over to me."

The methods aiming at a general appeal have failed to yield satisfactory results largely because they presuppose a state of mind that would meet the appeal with understanding and sympathy. These two essential qualities are not present in the case of the average immigrant, for he lacks both the background that would enable him to appreciate the message

of the missionary, and the need that would dispose him favorably toward it. The missionary that has obtained any measure of success is the one who has proceeded by the arduous and less spectacular way of seeking personal contacts with the individual immigrant. The more effective methods of evangelization, therefore, are those which are utilized in the second approach, that is, through individual work rather than through mass appeal.

Contacts with Individuals

There are three ways in which the missionary most frequently establishes contacts with individual immigrants:

1. Through the members of his congregation. They either invite their friends and relatives to church or arrange services in their homes, usually prayer meetings, to which they invite their neighbors. In this way the average church gains two to three members a year and sometimes a whole family. In some places this approach is used to the exclusion of others. It is not uncommon to find congregations in which the nucleus is a single family and the rest of the members are its relatives or close friends.

2. Through a personal effort to make acquaintances and win friends in the community. These efforts are most successful in cases where the missionary or minister participates in the activities of the community and has won its confidence and respect. One to two members a year are won in this way by the average church.

3. Through relief work. This is the most important contact-making activity, for it has yielded the richest harvest of new adherents and therefore requires special consideration.

Relief Work

Relief work does not merely refer to charity activities, such as the distribution of food and clothing, but includes all activities in which help is extended to immigrants by the mis-

sionary or the minister. The activities most frequently engaged in are: interpreting; translating; accompanying people to naturalization bureaus; bringing them in contact with welfare organizations, hospitals, and other agencies to secure the aid they need; supplying help in legal cases which are brought before children's courts and domestic courts; training for citizenship, such as English classes; securing employment; visiting the sick; providing protection from those who try to exploit the ignorance of the immigrant; and offering general advice. Because he regards it as his duty to be of service without remuneration and to meet petitioners with a sympathetic interest and a friendly attitude, the average minister or missionary is overwhelmed with demands for assistance and often is forced to devote practically his whole time to carrying on these activities. "I sometimes spend twenty-four hours a day in service work," said a prominent minister of a Mexican church in California. "I have usually two or three court cases to attend in the morning, in the afternoon I have to visit welfare and employment agencies with my countrymen who need aid, and I spend the night visiting the sick, receiving people who come for advice, and translating documents and letters."

Advantages of Relief Work

While relief work is regarded by the missionary as subsidiary to his main purpose, which is religious education, he quickly realizes that, in so far as its effect upon his real mission is concerned, it is not wasted effort. He soon discovers that in this indirect way he can accomplish more in winning new adherents than by all the other methods combined. The reasons are not far to seek. Relief work enables the missionary, first of all, to come in contact with large numbers of immigrants without imposing upon them. They meet him half way and make it easier for him to follow up an acquaintance and attempt to win attention for his religious

message. Secondly, relief work creates an attitude of appreciation for the mission enterprise and a favorable disposition toward Protestantism, which are important factors in overcoming the hostility and distrust that invariably confront the missionary at the beginning of his work. "The Protestants are good people. I was told a lot of bad things about them, but they are the only ones who help me and understand my plight. If it is their religion that makes them so friendly and helpful, it must be a good religion." This statement of a Catholic immigrant is typical of the widespread feeling the relief work of missionaries has created. Thirdly, relief work has led many people that obtained aid and comfort to seek more permanent associations with the mission enterprise and eventually to join it. Out of a feeling of gratitude or a sense of obligation for the generosity of the missionary they accept his invitation to come to his church. When these visits are repeated they not infrequently end with a confession of faith. Particularly responsive are those immigrants who, in addition to requiring aid, are also in need of an adequate group life, or of friendly relationships. These lonely and handicapped individuals find a refuge in the mission church where they are cordially received and where they find a congenial and solicitous group that satisfies their desire for response.

It is difficult to obtain an accurate estimate of the number of immigrants that became members of immigrant organizations through relief work. A check-up on one hundred members selected at random shows that more than sixty had their first contact with a mission by coming for assistance. This high percentage is confirmed by the opinion of practically all of the ministers interviewed, some of whom consider the figure too low and estimate a total of 80 per cent. It can safely be said, therefore, that more than one-half of the constituency of missions and churches is composed of individuals who became members through the indirect method of relief work. The advantages that the mission work derives from

an extensive use of this method are thus considerable. At the same time the missionary is performing valuable service to the immigrant cause, wholly apart from the promotion of his particular purpose. Thousands of individuals that never joined a mission church were aided in their efforts to adjust themselves to a new environment. It is only necessary to recognize the plight in which the average immigrant finds himself, confronted with unfamiliar conditions and surrounded at every step by people ready to exploit him, to appreciate the significance of the rôle of someone who is willing to render unselfish service, who can be trusted and who meets him with friendliness and sympathy. In many immigrant communities the missionary alone has played that rôle. Due recognition must therefore be given to the important function that mission work among immigrants has fulfilled in furthering the process of their adjustment to American life, in preventing failures and in alleviating distress.

Disadvantages of Relief Work

It is necessary to recognize that there is another side to the practice of giving relief as a means of promoting the mission enterprise.

We referred to the fact that relief work tends to create a favorable disposition toward the mission enterprise; but not infrequently it leads people to identify means and ends and to consider the mission or church primarily as a service agency. When this is the case, the missionary, in spite of his numerous contacts, will have difficulty in obtaining new adherents, for people will give little attention to his pleadings and will come for what they can get. The extent to which a mission center is sometimes considered merely the dispensary of benevolences is strikingly illustrated by the following incident: A woman, whose child had just died, visited the minister of a mission church in Los Angeles and complained to him that she could not bury her child because the priest

demanded ten dollars, which she did not possess. She begged the minister to help her. The minister gladly promised to bury her child without cost; but the woman raised her hand in horror. "What! Bury my child like a heathen without the blessing of the Church?" "My good woman," replied the surprised minister, "why did you come to see me then?" "I want you to give me the ten dollars," she answered.

Abuse of the goodwill of mission organizations is frequently reported. This is particularly true in places where food and clothing are distributed as charity. People will join the church and pretend to be ardent followers to assure themselves of support. This is shown by the fact that whenever a church which has given charity over a period of time discontinues the practice an immediate drop in membership takes place. On the other hand in places where charity is resumed the membership increases. A missionary who was questioned on the fluctuation in attendance at his mission explained, "You see we distribute baskets of food and clothing that are given us by our American friends every Easter and Thanksgiving. Around that time we always have a large attendance at our services and numerous applications for membership." Another form of abuse is illustrated by several cases found in the course of this investigation where members of a given church have held previous membership in churches of other denominations or simultaneously in two or three other mission churches. All of these churches gave charity to their members.

The immigrant, however, is not the only one that abuses relief work. The missionary or minister who is anxious to show a larger following may resort to relief work by giving aid to immigrants on condition that they join his church. Several ministers who were interviewed freely admitted this practice, justifying it with the claim (based apparently upon confidence in the persuasive power of their sermons) that those who came for what they could get, would ultimately

become converted, as long as they were made to attend church services. In a few cases, this abuse has led to a mass incorporation of new members. For example, a minister of a Colorado church recently reported an increase of two hundred members within two years. Inquiry revealed that this particular church was asked to distribute milk and food furnished by the community chest. The minister required those that came for relief to attend church services and to join the church. A similar case occurred in New York where a minister, upon assuming his office, found that his predecessor had on his list the names of three hundred members who could not be located. An investigation showed that these "members" were people to whom unemployment relief had been given at one time. While such cases are rare, some abuses were found in practically every place that carried on extensive relief work. On the basis of sample studies it was estimated that between 10 and 15 per cent of those who have joined the church through relief work must be discounted as belonging to the category of people who come for what they can get.

The following quotation from the bulletin of a mission church is symptomatic of the existing state of affairs: "There is considerable competition among Protestants in the neighborhood. There are two churches of many years standing and the Salvation Army. The latter is exceedingly active, having plenty of money at its disposal. They are able to do so much in a material way that they appeal to those who will attend the church that offers the largest inducement. We rather regret this duplication of effort but can hardly blame the needy for going where they will receive the help desired. This mission, instead of lessening its material ministry, will be compelled to increase it to maintain their interest. Our fathers emphasized the hope of a reward for the faithful in the by and by; the present generation desire to cash their expectations in the now and now."

Accomplishments of Formal Church Work

In the preceding paragraphs we have attempted to give a picture of the organization and activities of the formal church work of the mission enterprise. We now have to consider the accomplishments of this work—to what extent it has succeeded in evangelizing the Catholic immigrants.

It is very difficult to obtain accurate figures on the present status of membership in mission centers. The unreliability of available statistics is largely due to the fact that on the lists of members are carried the names of many persons that have for various reasons discontinued their affiliations with the church. One of the leading denominations recently introduced the policy of assessing churches on the basis of membership, and in consequence the number of active members reported dropped about 26 per cent. Incoming ministers frequently find that at least 20 per cent of the members carried on the lists of their predecessors cannot even be located.

Another source of unreliability is the inaccurate count of members. The estimates of different workers of a mission center usually are at variance. On the whole, a tendency toward exaggeration prevails. For instance, in the course of this investigation a check-up was made on the attendance at various church functions and it was found that it was invariably 20 to 25 per cent below the estimated average.

If we take the available figures at their face value the most that can be claimed by American churches engaged in mission work among Catholic immigrants is a total membership of between fifty and sixty thousand. This estimated total includes, besides converts from Catholicism, the children and grandchildren of converts who have not themselves been brought up in Catholicism, and also persons of Protestant stock. A study was made of a sample of 1,700 members of Protestant mission centers. Of these 44 per cent had two Protestant parents and 8 per cent had either a father or a

mother who was Protestant. Forty-eight per cent had both parents Catholic. If we apply these percentages to the estimated total we find that the number of Catholic immigrants in the present membership of American Protestant mission churches amounts to between twenty-five and thirty thousand.

But even if an estimated total of sixty thousand is taken as the measure of success of mission work among immigrants, a comparison with the total immigrant population from Catholic countries reveals the insignificance of the accomplishment. According to the 1930 census, there were in this country nearly fifteen million people of Italian, Slav, Magyar and Spanish-speaking stock, i.e. foreign-born and native-born of foreign and mixed parentage. Thus only one in three hundred immigrants from Catholic countries is a member of a Protestant mission church, a fact which clearly shows that the vast masses of Catholic immigrants have remained uninfluenced in spite of the efforts to reach them.

The failure of mission work to expand is further revealed by the data on the average number of members per mission center, the rate of increase, and the turn-over in membership.

Average Membership per Church

The average membership per mission center varies according to denomination and nationality. The Baptist Mexican centers show an average of thirty-five, the Free Methodist Spanish-speaking missions twenty-five, per mission center. Churches serving the Hungarians and Bohemians and other immigrant groups coming from countries that have considerable Protestant population, show higher averages than the churches serving the Mexicans and Poles, who are predominantly Catholic. For example, the average membership in the Magyar Presbyterian churches in 1929 was one hundred, whereas the average for the Spanish-speaking work of the same denomination was thirty-one per mission center. On the basis of the available data the average number of mem-

bers for all mission centers has been estimated at between sixty and seventy for each center. This average is 34 per cent of the average membership for all American churches, which Dr. C. Luther Fry has estimated to be 191 per church, and only about 10 per cent of the average membership for the American churches in large cities and metropolitan districts, which, according to Fry, is 465 and 787 respectively.[1]

The average of about seventy members per center has remained virtually stationary throughout the history of mission work among immigrants, although a tendency toward decrease has become noticeable in recent years. Thus the average membership per mission center for the Italian Presbyterian centers decreased by 18 per cent from 1918 to 1929, and for the Hungarian churches of the same denomination by 23 per cent. The inability of mission enterprises to raise or even maintain their average membership indicates that there are definite limits set to the expansion of the individual mission church. This limit is not due to the lack of facilities, for most churches are found to be half empty. It may be due in part to the slackening of the missionary spirit after the main goal, which is the formation of a church group, has been accomplished. This point of view is best stated in the following quotation: "The early stage of our mission work is usually one of intense evangelistic passion. Every member is a missionary; the atmosphere is electric with fervor and devotion; the new-found joy and freedom must be proclaimed everywhere and incessantly; hardship and persecution are cheerfully endured.

"There succeeds a period when the group becomes large enough to furnish sufficient spiritual fellowship so that the members are constantly in danger of becoming contented. . . . This is the danger point . . . progress begins to slow up and glory fade." [2] More emphatic yet is another writer who

[1] Fry, C. Luther, *The U. S. Looks at Its Churches* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1930), p. 54.

[2] Brooks, C. A., *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32.

says, "Too many new converts sit down contented with the fact that they are converted. The church of Christ gains very little more than their useless, uncreditable names on their muster rolls." [8]

This point of view fails, however, to consider the fact that the slackening of the missionary spirit may be not the cause of the failure to expand but the result of the impossibility of such expansion because of insurmountable obstacles. The discussion of the limitations to which mission work is subjected will show that the reason for small membership is to be sought in the fact that only a limited number of individuals within each immigrant group are susceptible to the missionary appeal, and that once that number is approximated a resistance is encountered that is very difficult to overcome.

Rate of Increase and Turnover

A further indication of the lack of vitality of mission churches is their low rate of increase. Thus the average increase for the Baptist churches among the Bohemians, Italians, Mexicans, and Poles combined was 3.3 per annum from 1916 to 1922. With other denominations the rate of increase varies between 3.0 and 7.5 per mission center. The reason for the small gains is to be found in the large turnover in membership which most of the immigrant churches experience. This turnover is in part due to the migratory tendencies of certain immigrant groups, such as the Mexicans for example, and the considerable mobility of immigrant communities in general. In part it is due to the temporary character of many affiliations with mission centers where the inducement to join was the expectation of material benefits, or where conversion had no lasting effect and the individual returned to his former church.

The extent of the turnover is indicated most strikingly by the membership data of the Presbyterian church, which keeps

[8] *The Friend of Missions*, July-August, 1931, p. 83.

the most adequate statistics. Thus the number of members in the Magyar Presbyterian churches has increased by only a few hundreds between 1915 and 1929, whereas the additions through examination reported for this period amount to 3,599. Data for the Italian work are equally revealing. Here the membership has actually decreased by about 2,000 in the period from 1918 to 1930, whereas the additions through examination alone were more than 3,600.[4] In other words, the turnover may be so rapid that in many centers the addition of new members is not sufficient to maintain a stationary membership. Large turnovers are also found in the mission work of other denominations. For example, the Mexican Baptist work showed a turnover of more than 40 per cent in the years 1927 to 1931. In view of this the complaint of a minister who was accused of lack of initiative in promotion work can be easily understood. "I have my hands full trying to keep intact the membership which I already have; I have to rely on the Grace of God to send me new members."

Decrease in Membership

The development of membership in immigrant mission centers reveals three distinct periods: The first was characterized by a brisk growth as those susceptible to missionary appeals were won, and as new centers were opened in rapid succession. In the second period, growth had practically ceased but the membership maintained itself on the level achieved in the first period. The third, and present, period is characterized by a slow tendency toward decrease in membership. Thus 35 per cent of the churches that were studied

[4] The figures of increase or decrease for the Magyar and Italian Presbyterian churches are estimated. The official statements for the earlier years (1915 for the Magyar and 1918 for the Presbyterian centers) give membership figures *for the number of centers reporting,* which were considerably fewer than the actual number of centers. In 1929 all of the Magyar and all but two of the Italian centers reported membership. To make the figures roughly comparable, the average membership of the centers reporting has been applied to those which failed to report.

show a decrease in membership over the last ten-year period. A tacit recognition of the failure of the formal church approach to yield satisfactory results can be seen in the present policy of the denominations, which is definitely set against the opening of new centers. This policy in turn affects adversely the total figures on membership, for with a definite limit set to the expansion of a center the addition of new centers was the most important factor in the increase of membership in the first period. With the decrease in membership the number of centers in operation is also decreasing. For example, the Presbyterians reported 107 Italian mission centers in 1921 and only 73 in 1930, a decrease of 43 in ten years. Seven centers reported in 1928 by the Baptists, in their Mexican work alone, are unreported in 1931.

The liquidation of mission centers will undoubtedly continue, as membership falls off and self-support is not forthcoming. Most of the centers to-day are in a precarious situation. Some churches that were once flourishing institutions have only half or a quarter of their former membership. In some others attendance has dwindled down to such an extent that they are leading merely a vegetating existence. Practically all of the centers at present maintain themselves by virtue of the support which they receive from home-mission boards or American churches. Should this support be suddenly withdrawn only a bare handful would be able to survive.

The unimpressive results of fifty years of formal church work among immigrants clearly show that it has failed to fulfil the expectation of serving as an adequate means of evangelizing the masses of Catholic immigrants. The approach through the organization of missions and foreign-language churches, with their methods of mass appeal and individual work, has failed to create a movement toward Protestantism among immigrants. Mission centers established at great cost in money and energy have not grown into large churches as expected. Many mission churches to-day are

struggling for their very existence, and are attempting to combat financial difficulties, stagnation or decrease in membership, and the growing apathy of the community. The inadequacy of the accomplishments of formal church work is recognized by most of the leaders in this mission field today. The following statement is from an unpublished report of a leader in the work of his denomination among foreign-born. It is frank because it purports to arouse his group to renewed efforts in the field of immigrant work. "We must be sensible of the many mistakes which have been made, of sins of commission and omission, and must realize that with all the efforts that have been expended we have *scarcely made an impression* upon the field that lies before us." Another statement, more cautious but equally positive, says:

"Of the Protestant churches' ministry to the foreign-born it must be recognized that the evidences of success are not numerous nor impressive. An exception must, of course, be made in the case of foreign groups whose background is Protestant, who readily form autonomous congregations or communions. Many of our church leaders feel that the Protestant approach to population groups drawn from Catholic countries rests on no carefully considered theory or policy and that in too many cases the net result is to create friction between Catholic and Protestant churches without making a fundamental contribution to the religious lives of the people themselves. Indeed the question has been raised in high ecclesiastical circles whether Protestantism as such has any genius qualifying it for a ministry to Latin people. Whatever the answer may be, there will probably be general agreement that the present status of Protestant foreign work in our cities is far from satisfactory." [5]

Limitations of Formal Church Work

The expansion of the mission enterprise among immigrants by the approach through formal church work is handicapped,

[5] Johnson, F. E. (Ed.) *The Social Work of the Churches* (New York; Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 1930), pp. 39-40.

on the one hand, by difficulties that inhere in the religious nature of the work, on the other, by obstacles that are due to the resistance of social forces operating in the immigrant community. In consequence the development of the mission enterprise can at best be a slow process. But the nature of the handicaps is such that they not only slow down the process but preclude development beyond certain limits, so that only a radical change in existing conditions could make formal church work more effective.

Time Required for Conversion

The conversion of immigrants with a Catholic background, which is the ultimate aim of formal church work, is now generally recognized by the mission workers to be a slow process. Very few leaders were found that still clung to a belief in the efficacy of the fervent emotional appeal of the evangelist, urging an immediate decision. The experienced missionary realizes that high-pressure methods are of no avail, for the Catholic immigrant usually lacks the background that would enable him to comprehend the meaning and significance of the Protestant message unless he has been subjected to a prolonged period of reconditioning. "Most of those with whom we have to deal," says a report of the Baptist Home Mission Society, "are not acquainted with Baptist ideas; they have been accustomed to the formalism and domination of state churches combined with the assumptions of Romish sacerdotalism. They hardly know the meaning of individual conviction and responsibility in religion. Democratic church organization is beyond their grasp."

Many leaders speak of the difficulty they have in getting their ideas across. They complain of "the ignorance of Catholics on religious problems," that Catholics "cannot get the point," that one cannot "talk sense with them."

Careful teaching and explanation over a long period are therefore necessary before the average Catholic immigrant

can readjust his ideas and become familiar with the tenets of Protestant faith. "I have found," said an experienced missionary, "that eight to ten years are required to make an effective conversion. In order to build a solid, dependable group of members one must allow them to become adjusted, grow into the new situation, not scare them away by rush methods."

According to the statements of other missionaries ten years are not sufficient to make sure of a convert. Others doubt whether individuals who were brought up in the religious ideas of non-Protestant faiths can be "really" converted, and declare that only in the second or third generation will the desired results show themselves.

"Among the converts of my church many retain Catholic notions and beliefs which I cannot eradicate," said one leader. Another confesses that out of two hundred members in his church he can be sure of only twenty "real converts." Estimates of other leaders regarding the number of those in their congregations upon whom they can count indicate that at least half of the average congregation of an immigrant church does not live up to the standards of "real" conversion.

Instability of Conversion

The instability of many conversions is shown by a considerable amount of backsliding on the part of immigrants even after they have joined the church. "With our Italians," said a minister, "we cannot be sure that conversion is complete until they die, for it often happens that before death a convert will return to his former church in order to be buried in holy ground."

Not only for burials but also for other functions, such as baptism or marriage, the sanction of the church in which they were brought up is sought by the converted immigrants. The lack of faith in the efficacy of Protestant ceremonialism is frequently the despair of the minister who has labored

hard to effect a reconditioning but finds himself face to face with the force of tradition which no argument can overcome. The force of traditional beliefs shows itself also in cases where a crisis is experienced by a convert, such as an unexpected death in the family or adverse economic conditions. In these cases an individual is likely to return to his former church, which tradition has taught him to be the source of protective power, and he will attribute his misfortune to his break with the Catholic church. "We have a hard time convincing some of our people that the trouble they experience is not a punishment for the renunciation of allegiance to the Catholic church," complained a Mexican minister.

It was found that the depression had had a dampening effect on the enthusiasm of many converts and had led some to discontinue their church attendance. "I do not understand why I should be made to suffer like this for I have become a true believer," was one of the complaints that is typical of the comment of many unemployed converts who were interviewed. Such reactions in the face of crises indicate that to many immigrant converts Protestantism is far from having become the vital experience that was hoped for.

The Religiously Inclined and the Indifferent

The time and effort that must be spent by the missionary to prepare the average immigrant for membership in a Protestant church and the uncertainty of many conversions are mainly responsible for the slowness of such expansion as has taken place. Moreover, a definite limit to possible expansion under existing conditions is set by the fact that a favorable response to the approach of the missionary presupposes on the part of the immigrant an interest in religious subjects and a certain intensity of religious feeling. But the people who are religiously inclined are in most cases already members of some religious body. Hence the most desirable prospects from a missionary point of view are those who have to

be won over from another faith. "I have convinced myself," said a missionary, "that the best members of our foreign-language churches are immigrants who were good Catholics; once they accept the Gospel they are real converts—good dependable Protestants—whereas indifferent Catholics make indifferent Protestants."

The difficulty is, however, that the conversion of individuals who are actively affiliated with a church is definitely restricted, in part by the decision of many ministers to abstain from proselyting activities, but mainly because very few immigrants whose religious interest is organized about the Catholic church can be taken away from that church. Indeed the appeal of the missionary to a believer, when heeded, frequently leads to a disorganization of the person's religious life rather than to a change of allegiance. The statement of a young Catholic who has participated since boyhood in the social activities of an institutional church, illustrates rather typically the way in which this disorganization expresses itself. On being asked whether he was planning to join the institutional church, he replied, "I don't think so. I have become suspicious of all churches. My church says that it is the only true church. The people here tell me that their church is the true church. Whom shall I believe? Maybe they are both wrong. Does it really matter then whether you belong to this or that church or to none at all?" Thus the attempt to refute the claims of another church may awaken a sense of the relativity of religious beliefs which is likely to shake faith in churches in general.

The resistance of the Catholic immigrant who is loyal to his church was recognized in the early stages of the missionary movement as constituting a practically impregnable barrier against missionary efforts, and the leaders of the movement, therefore, centered their hopes mainly upon winning those immigrants who had become indifferent to the Catholic church. But here again the movement found itself up

against a definite limitation to expansion, since most immigrants that have become indifferent to their own church are not approachable because their loss of interest in the church is usually a result of loss of interest in religion in general.

Thus the Protestant missionary finds himself upon the horns of a dilemma. In the case of the loyal Catholic the presence of a religious interest is of no avail because of the strong hold that his own church has upon him; in the case of the indifferent Catholic, the lack of religious interest deprives the missionary of the entering wedge that alone can make his appeal effective. "I have made it my task to work among the indifferent Catholics of our community," said a missionary worker among Italians. "I have made many friends among them; I visit in their homes, and they come to mine. But I cannot make any headway. They avoid discussions of religious subjects, they act bored or put me off with a jest when I turn the conversation to religious matters. They are interested in gossip, in sports and in business; but they don't want to be bothered with religion."

Recognition of the difficulty of reaching the indifferent Catholics has led some of the missionary leaders to abandon the formal church-work approach in favor of an approach through social and cultural activities. This position is best stated in the words of the director of one of the Neighborhood Houses in Chicago. "I proceed on the theory that people who have escaped organized religion will naturally be reluctant to join a church. You cannot expect people to jump from one church into another just because they have become indifferent to their former church. A period of transition must be inaugurated during which the immigrant is made to participate in activities under Protestant auspices that have a minimum of religious emphasis."

Since neither the loyal nor the indifferent Catholics can be counted on as hopeful prospects for missionary endeavors, the Protestant churches are definitely limited to that group

of immigrants that are dissatisfied with their church but at the same time retain the kind of religious attitude which requires organized religion for its expression and which is likely therefore to lead them to join another church.

The Puritanical Emphasis in Protestantism

Another limitation to the development of the missionary movement lies in the puritanical emphasis in Protestantism. The candidate for church-membership is subjected, by most of the churches under consideration, to a regimentation of behavior. He is expected to give up smoking, drinking, dancing, attendance at the theater and so forth, and this means that he must reorganize his social life. Here we encounter one of the many examples of the clash between cultural patterns characteristic of the mission enterprise among Catholic immigrants. On the one hand, is a group that holds to a strict, puritanical code of private morals; on the other, a group with personal ethics that are much more lenient and permit greater freedom of conduct.

Resistance of Social Forces

So far in this section we have dealt with the limitations on expansion of the formal church work among Catholic immigrants imposed by the very nature of the religious work involved. But there are also, as was stated earlier, obstacles of a social nature which act as powerful deterrents to a change of allegiance and thus further limit the number of those who can be won for Protestantism.

Indifference of the Immigrant Community

Nowhere has the mission work found the support of the immigrant community. The prevailing attitude is one of indifference, and in most cases the work of the missionary is ignored by the public. Occasionally, however, active opposition is encountered. Particularly at the beginning of an enterprise a missionary not infrequently has to suffer a great

deal of annoyance and interference with his work. The windows of his mission center may be broken, garbage and dirt deposited on its steps, the tires of his car punctured. He may be a target for missiles when leaving or entering the center. His meetings are interfered with and he is rudely repulsed when trying to make contacts. The few members of the community that join him in his effort to organize a mission center are ridiculed or met with contempt. "Our members were creeping to the Center in the shadow of darkness because they were afraid and ashamed to be seen," relates a Mexican minister. "I had to move to the outskirts of the immigrant district," said an Italian pastor, "for when I had the Center in the midst of the Italian community many people refused to come because they did not want to be seen entering it."

The following is a quotation from the published history of one of the institutional churches in Chicago:

"When the mission was begun and through all its earlier years, it was much hated as a 'Protestant' church. Decaying fruit and dead animals, brickbats and stones broke windows and interrupted the services. 'Gangs' came not to worship but to interfere with worship. There was abundant evidence of an organized attempt to drive us out of the community—this by a hoodlum lot who thought to do God a service. Heavy screens were the only protection for our windows which were broken each week or as often as they were renewed. The workers were assailed as they came and went. In one instance a knife was drawn on a worker inside of the church. Vile language, annoying puns and slurs were common weapons. The open interruptions of public worship were sometimes so flagrant and persistent that the minister himself a few times found himself provoked to a violation of the doctrine of non-resistance to the point of descending from the pulpit to thrash and expel by physical force the invaders, returning to the pulpit to continue the message of the Prince of Peace." [6]

[6] *Olivet Institute* (Chicago, 1913), p. 91.

Active opposition, however, does not continue for long. This is partly because of the persistence of the missionary, but largely because in the course of time his work ceases to be considered a threat to the established order of things. Opposition in the beginning of a mission enterprise is the natural reaction of suspicion and antagonism toward the "intruder," who does not fulfil a function assigned to him by the community, but assumes one which, by implication, threatens to disrupt the community, since it attacks established institutions, such as the church, and is directed against traditional ways of living. It is essentially opposition against the "new," the consequences of which cannot as yet be seen.

As disrupting effects fail to materialize and it becomes increasingly apparent that the mission center is not able to exert any far-reaching influence or make substantial inroads in the community by winning a large following, the opposition subsides and lapses into indifference. A certain amount of rancor and hostility may continue to prevail, particularly in places where the immigrants are aware that the mission center is supported by Americans or where Americans conduct its activities. "Americans think we are no good. They criticize what we do and what we believe, and want us to be as they are," was the statement of an immigrant who in this way expressed the prevalent feeling that Americans show an attitude of superiority, and a certain amount of condescension, in their dealings with the foreign-born. "Why do they come to us? We are not heathen. Why don't they work among their own people who do not go to church?" This resentment against being considered an object of missionary activities is also frequently expressed by immigrants. Many of the current accusations of unjustified interference on the part of missions must be attributed to the sensitiveness of the immigrant to his inferior status, rather than to his insight. But they are real, nevertheless, and the source of a persistent ill feeling in some immigrant communities.

In general, however, the community becomes used to the mission center, and where extensive relief is distributed may even be favorably disposed toward it. Sometimes a minister, because of his personal qualifications, may succeed in winning the confidence of the community and be permitted to participate in its activities as a representative of his institution. But most commonly no attention is paid to the mission center in the community. Immigrants living in the neighborhood of a center sometimes do not know its location and often are unaware of its nature. No instance is known in which a mission church has become an integral part of an immigrant community, enjoying a status of equality with other institutions. They all remain "outside" of the community in which they operate, "tolerated impostors" as the leader of an Italian immigrant organization has called them.

Opposition of the Catholic Church

The activities of the Catholic church have been in some degree influential in preventing the development of a better feeling toward mission centers. In most immigrant communities the Catholic church occupies an important position and is the arbiter of public opinion, for the church fulfils not only a religious function but it serves also as the nucleus around which the immigrant community organizes itself, and it promotes many of the social activities and institutions that play a vital rôle in immigrant life. Among many immigrant groups, for example the Poles, the church has significance also as a symbol of nationality. To change one's religion implies, therefore, the capital offense of disloyalty and the violation of national solidarity. It is of interest to observe in this connection that among the Italians a more favorable disposition toward Protestantism prevailed as long as the feud between church and state lasted. It was "patriotic" to be opposed to the church. But since the signing of the concordat this attitude has changed and loyalty to the traditional

church is coming to be regarded as an integral part of national loyalty. It is significant that there are several instances on record of mission centers that were stoned by a mob of young Italians after the news of an agreement between Mussolini and the Vatican became known.

The social rôle that the Catholic church plays in immigrant communities fortifies the strong position which it already occupies by virtue of the traditional and sentimental attachment to it as the ancestral church. The influence of the Catholic church in molding the opinion of its adherents is therefore considerable. That it is not the dominant factor causing ill-feeling toward mission work is, however, shown by the absence of an attitude of toleration in communities where the immigrants do not have a church of their own.

The opposition of the Catholic church to Protestant mission work is not carried on in the systematic fashion of an organized movement, partly because the church leaders are not perturbed about the mission work. Thus the Catholic priests who were interviewed stated that they accepted the findings of Dr. Shaughnessy, who states that "it is very probable that there has been no loss [of Catholics] at all, beyond that defection of Catholics which ordinarily takes place among any population, due to the weakness of human nature and the usual manifestations of the same." [7] In part the lack of organized opposition is due to the desire to avoid the attention which such opposition would inevitably draw to the mission center. "We welcome opposition," said a leading missionary, "because it puts us on the map, it makes people curious about us and it helps our morale, whereas indifference has a deadening effect upon our work."

But the Catholic churches are far from being passive, although they actively oppose the center only sporadically and in specific instances that demand counteraction. This coun-

[7] Shaughnessy, G., *Has the Immigrant Kept His Faith?* (New York; The Macmillan Co., 1925), p. 225.

teraction in most cases consists in the use of means of control that are effective because of the strong position the church occupies in the community. "The priest in our community," relates the minister of an active Italian mission center, "keeps close watch over the members of his church. As soon as he learns that anyone is attending another church he goes after them, and that is the end of that."

Judging from the reports of other centers, visitation by the priest of families which have shown a favorable attitude toward the approaches of the missionary is the device most commonly employed. The picketing of mission centers by priests or nuns is also practiced, particularly when activities for children or young people are carried on, such for instance, as a newly organized Daily Vacation Bible School. Picketing has the effect of scaring many children away, at least temporarily. Occasionally a sermon will be devoted to denunciation of Protestants, and dire consequences, including excommunication, are threatened for making contacts with missionaries. Where the attraction of relief work by mission centers is too great to make threats effective, advice is given to go and get what is offered but to disregard the religious teachings.

Social Constraint

The attitude taken by the immigrant community toward the mission center has a determining influence upon the reaction of the individual immigrant toward the approaches of the missionary. A member of an immigrant group may be favorably disposed toward the suggestion of joining a mission center, but he will hesitate to change his allegiance so long as he realizes that it may adversely affect his position in the community. Because the mission center is not considered an indigenous part of the community his intention will be construed as disloyalty to the group and pressure will be brought upon him by his family, his friends, his business

associates, and the members of organizations to which he belongs. An Italian minister reports: "A woman is attending our church regularly and has been for a number of years. Her family does not cease to warn her against renouncing her faith. Her husband has left her because he became disgusted with her devotion to us. She is afraid to become a member of our church for fear of breaking with the rest of her family. This is true for a number of other Italians who are coming to this church." Unless the whole family joins the church domestic discord is of frequent occurrence. Where husband or wife alone, or the children only, participate in the activities of the mission centers, many cases have been reported of husbands beating up wives, of hysterical wives coming to the center after their husbands, and of parents fighting their children. That the threat of discord is not always a deterrent, however, is indicated by a census of one thousand married members of mission churches which shows that 11 per cent have wives who are not mission church-members and 19 per cent have husbands who are not affiliated with the mission church.

The constraining force exercised by the community on the individual is less direct than the family influence, but it is effective enough in most cases to discourage a break with the traditional church. To the average immigrant, engrossed in the task of making a living and dependent upon the community for his success, the expectation of retaliation or ostracism by the community is sufficient to restrain him from launching upon an uncertain adventure which threatens to bring him, as a nonconformist, into conflict with his environment. Many immigrants of various nationalities who were found, when interviewed, to entertain a favorable attitude toward the Protestant church, expressed their unwillingness to take the decisive step for fear of the adverse effect that a change of religion might have on the connections which they had established in the community, on their business, and on

their social position in general. "In our community," said a Polish immigrant, "if you open a business and want to succeed you have to rent a pew in the Catholic church. How can you think then of changing your religion?" "My clients are all Catholics," said an Italian shoemaker; "if I break with the church I will lose most of them." "I am somewhat of a leader in my community," said the secretary of a Hungarian benevolent society; "if I became a Protestant I am afraid that I should lose the influence I have." These are some characteristic expressions that show how the fear of adverse consequences operates in concrete situations.

The constraint that the expectation of an unfavorable reaction on the part of the community imposes varies in strength with the degree to which the community is integrated. Where the community is yet in its formative stage, or where it is composed of different nationalities, there is less constraint than in well-established and homogeneous communities. The community influence differs also according to the position of the individual in his social environment, and the extent to which he is bound to his community by ties of sentiment and by consideration for his livelihood.

Of interest in this connection are some of the results of the sample study of 1,700 members of Protestant mission centers. Data were collected on their occupational and educational status and on their affiliation with immigrant organizations. It was shown that of those members who were gainfully employed 49 per cent were laborers and 42 per cent skilled workers, while 5 per cent were engaged in professional services, and 4 per cent in trade. If we take the religious background into consideration, we find that 67 per cent of the laborers had both parents Catholic, and that 60 per cent of the gainfully employed members of the mission centers from Catholic homes were laborers. As to the educational status of members twenty-one years old and over, we find that 7 per cent had no schooling at all and 67 per cent attended ele-

mentary school only. Ninety-five per cent of those with no schooling and 73 per cent of those who attended elementary school only, had a Catholic background. Thirteen per cent of the total sample could not speak the English language. The data on membership in immigrant societies reveal the significant fact that 80 per cent of the mission church-members did not belong to any immigrant association, and that none occupied a position of leadership in the community.

These figures indicate that it is the Catholic immigrant of low economic and educational status, and with few or no affiliations in the community, that is most likely to join a mission center.

Conclusions

We have found a twofold limitation imposed upon the development of the missionary movement among immigrants. Its religious emphasis and its insistence upon modes of living that run counter to the pattern of conduct prevailing in most immigrant groups, make it difficult to win adherents from among the loyal and the indifferent Catholics alike. Its inability to establish itself as an integral part of the immigrant community further curtails the range of its effectiveness to the extent that even those who are favorably disposed toward the movement will, in most cases, refrain from joining it for fear of encountering the opposition of the community. The number of those who can be won over to Protestantism is therefore definitely limited, and those who can be counted upon as prospective candidates in a particular immigrant community constitute only a small minority.

It was found that the immigrants that are likely to join the Protestant mission churches fall into the following groups:

1. Immigrants who have had a Protestant background, i.e. those who belonged to Protestant churches in the old country, like the Lutheran, Waldensian, Reformed, and others. They constitute the backbone of a great many immigrant churches

and in most cases have served as the nucleus around which the churches were originally organized. The following quotation is from an unpublished manuscript of the history of the mission work of one of the leading denominations. It says with reference to the first twenty years of development:

"The denomination was supporting a considerable number of foreign-language churches and missions, most of them having but a meagre equipment, a conventional church program, and an indifferent leadership, and most of them ministering primarily to the small nucleus of the immigrant group which had some Protestant background of the Reformed type. It is important to note in this connection that even with the Italian immigrant the very small nucleus of Waldensians were most influential in the early Italian missions and churches. From this church came many of the early church-members as well as the ministers."

2. The children of converted parents who were brought up in Sunday school and were never in touch with Catholicism. Among 1,700 members, twenty-one years old and over, this group was found to constitute 25 per cent of the total.

3. Immigrants who are dissatisfied with their church but who are in need of organized religion. Many of these are attracted by the personal and intimate character of Protestant religious life, with its public confessions and testimony and the participation of the individual in church government. Others again find in the conviction of belonging to the elect and being saved here and now an adequate release for their tensions. This is a reason why many ministers consider the fundamentalist approach to be the most effective in immigrant work. Some light is also thrown on the prevalence of an emotional type in this group by the effectiveness of the proselyting activities of the more emotional sects. In organizing a mission station the Pentecostals, Russelites and others usually go after the members of mission churches first, for they find that many of them respond readily to their appeal.

Their favorite procedure, therefore, is to open a mission station in close proximity to an immigrant church and to follow members to their homes. They usually succeed in winning over, at least temporarily, a considerable number of them. Some mission centers report that at one time or another half of their congregation have gone over to some Pentecostal or similar group, attracted by the greater emotional fervor of the services.

4. Immigrants who join the church for the material benefits that they derive from membership. This motive does not lead in all cases to lasting affiliations. Many that are in need come for what they can get and stay as long as they expect certain advantages. The extensive distribution of relief by the mission centers, particularly in the formative stages of mission work, has encouraged the idea that one can always expect support and help in exchange for joining the church. Nevertheless, some of those who come for material benefits become real converts and find a new motive for belonging to the church. The following quotation from the autobiography of a former Catholic illustrates this type:

"My heart was heavy; I approached my destination already defeated; all of this seemed so useless. I expected even worse treatment than that I received at the hands of the Catholic priest, but this was the last resort and to try it was the least I could do. This time I planned to tell my story in such a way as to make it impressive, even lie if necessary. I walked into the church office and a young lady asked me what I wanted. I started to tell her my troubles, but before I had a chance to say much she said, 'Oh, yes, you are Mr. X, we have been expecting you,' and she directed me to go right in to see Reverend K. Reverend K. held out his hand to me and welcomed me as if he had known me for a long time. He informed me that my foreman's wife had communicated with him about me and that he thought he could help me out if I would be good enough to tell him my troubles. His attitude was so cordial, so different from what I expected and received at the

Catholic church that I could hardly keep from crying. I told the whole story to Reverend K. and he advised me that an excellent doctor, who was a member of his church, would get in touch with the doctors treating my wife and take over the case. To make sure, he telephoned to Dr. B. and the latter agreed to take over the case. In addition Reverend K. told me that he thought he could get someone to take care of the accumulated hospital bills for me. All of this made me so happy that I cried like a child and Reverend K. comforted me and after inviting me to come back to see him the following week told me to go to break the good news to my wife.

"This was one of the happiest days in my life. New hope was given me. I prayed and thanked God that night for having not forsaken me. Just to think that the Baptists could do so much for a total stranger was more than I could understand. 'They must be the people of God,' I repeated to myself many times. . . . Dr. B. took over the case of my wife and got another doctor interested in it. They performed another operation and in two months my wife was able to come home to me and her baby.

"I went back to see Reverend K. many times. He invited me to come to his services and I came cheerfully, for how could I ever refuse to do anything for a man who had done so much for me? Furthermore, I saw the error of my ways in the past and I was determined to redeem myself for my sins and trespasses. I wanted to know more about such a wonderful religion as Baptism and if possible to become a member of their church. I attended prayer meetings and church services regularly and all of the religious doubts that I ever had were gone forever. I was the only immigrant coming to the church at this time and all of the members treated me wonderfully. Everyone spoke kindly to me and called me 'brother' as if I was really one of them already. My wife and I shall never forget the things these good people provided when we were in great need, and the presents they sent us for the holidays made them really enjoyable ones. It seemed that we were little children again and that some fairy godmother was ever watchful over us.

"Many times I asked Reverend K. to tell me how I could ever

repay these good people for their kindness and he would always tell me to pray and be faithful to Him and He would show me the way. And He did, for I became a Baptist just five months after first coming to the Baptist church. My wife joined about six months later."

5. Immigrants who are in need of sympathetic friendship and moral support but who lack adequate social contacts and find in the congregation of a mission church a congenial fellowship. In most cases these immigrants are recent arrivals to this country, or are those who have not found a place for themselves in the social life of the immigrant community. The following quotation from the autobiography of a Hungarian immigrant illustrates this type:

"Soon after I came with him to this country my son died. I was left alone, I had no friends and nobody to console me. In despair I walked aimlessly around in the Hungarian neighborhood but I felt strange in these new surroundings and the people looked so indifferent that I had no courage to approach them. One day I walked by a building in which I heard an organ playing. Impulsively I entered and was met by a man who greeted me with a friendly handshake and invited me to come in. . . . I soon felt at home in this small gathering of my countrymen who were all friendly to me, inquired about me and tried to cheer me up. A feeling of anxiety and despair that had haunted me for weeks gradually gave room to a feeling of happiness. . . . I began to attend meetings regularly."

A similar experience is recounted by a Mexican who later became a minister among his people.

"Walking the streets of a California city, an aimless stranger in a strange land, I met a man who asked me to go to church. The word 'church' had become a terrible name to me. I objected. This quiet man was reasonable. He just asked me to go and see and told me that he would go with me. At church I met happy friends. . . . Life began to hold joyous promises for me."

CHAPTER III

The Social Program

After thirty years of experimentation with the formal religious approach in their mission enterprise among Catholic immigrants, the churches launched a new experiment which involved the addition of secular features to their program. Such features as educational classes, the promotion of sports and various club activities constitute what has been called the social program of mission work. This program was originally intended as a supplement to regular church activities, but it gradually grew into an enterprise of major proportions and in many places it became the exclusive form of work among immigrants and their children.

Reasons for Development of the Social Program

The Inadequacy of Formal Church Work

The adoption of a social program was primarily the result of a growing recognition of the inadequacy of formal church work. The slow expansion of membership had dimmed the hopes for a successful evangelization of the masses of immigrants "in this generation." As experience accumulated it became increasingly evident that not even in the long run could the appeal through formal church work be expected to yield the desired results. The further the assimilation of the immigrant progressed the more difficult it was to approach him. The fact that relief work became less and less important curtailed to a great extent the only effective means of making contacts on a large scale. The restriction of immigration added another barrier to future expansion for it was

the newcomer who was most responsive to the approach of the missionary.

The Need to Interest Young People

A major reason for developing the social program was the lack of responsiveness to missionary efforts shown by the second generation. The young people were little attracted by Sunday-school activities, religious discussions and church services. They showed no serious interest in doctrinal and theological viewpoints, and they lacked the religious background that accounted for the fervor shown by some of the older people after conversion. The church had difficulty in holding even those who had been brought up by converted parents and had attended Sunday school, and it was practically impossible to interest the children of non-Protestant immigrants in the missionary movement. Unless there was greater expansion through natural growth and the influx of young people the mission enterprise was threatened with failure.

We find, therefore, that as the hope of winning the first generation faded the task of gaining a following from among the second generation became vitally important. But how was a following to be secured sufficiently large to insure the progress of the mission enterprise? It was imperative that some way be found to attract the young people and to hold their interest while efforts were made to evangelize them. The only way to accomplish this was to make room at the mission center for the activities which youth enjoys.

Every mission organization sooner or later had to meet this demand. Quite early in the history of missionary work among Catholic immigrants we find attempts to supplement the religious program with social activities. The missions sponsored weekly or monthly gatherings at which games were played; they promoted picnics, entertainments, theatri-

cals, and occasionally provided sports for the young people's societies. The aim of the mission worker in these and similar attempts was to foster the formation of face-to-face groups in which the young people would carry on their social life under his guidance and supervision. It was hoped that if these groups sufficiently absorbed the social interests of the individual and provided him with all the contacts he desired, his participation in church activities and his eventual union with the church would be assured. Furthermore, the social life offered by these groups would attract the young people of the neighborhood and bring them into contact with the church.

As time went on, the development of a program for young people gradually became the main concern of the mission enterprise among immigrants. In consequence of the vigorous promotion of activities that would appeal to and interest the young people, not only did the formal church program take second place, but adult work in general received less and less attention. Many mission centers of to-day have entirely given up serving the adult and are working exclusively with children and adolescents.

"Competition" of Secular Institutions

A recognition of the fact that the social program of mission centers grew out of the requirements of the immediate situation should not lead us, however, to disregard the effect of outside factors that have indirectly influenced its promotion. First of all, there was the significant fact that the secular institutions serving the immigrant were following an extensive social program that was drawing large numbers and finding substantial support in the community. The "competition" offered by these institutions could be met effectively only through the adoption of a similar program. The churches felt justified in promoting activities corresponding to those of boys' clubs, community centers, and social settle-

ments, not only because they realized that in view of the widespread need there would be no duplication of effort, but primarily because they believed that the church alone could contribute a moral and spiritual influence which would make these activities of lasting value.

The Social Interpretation of Christianity

In the second place, the churches were encouraged in fostering a social program because of the new interpretation of Christianity which became current at the end of the last century. Under the influence of such men as Rauschenbush and Peabody, the Christian Socialists and others, the idea became generally accepted that Christianity had not only a gospel for the individual, but also a gospel for the regeneration of society. The belief that social salvation is needed to make individual salvation more effective thus became a new tenet of the faith of Christian churches. It led them to participate actively in the solution of social problems and in the amelioration of existing social conditions. It favored the adoption on their part of measures not designed to accomplish a strictly religious purpose but aiming rather at the reconstruction of social life, the improvement of relationships, and particularly the provision of greater educational, social and recreational opportunities for the underprivileged. The following statement from an annual report of the Presbyterian (U.S.A.) Board of Home Missions illustrates this new position of the churches:

"Social service in the program of the Home Mission Board is the effort of the church to meet the needs of the community in the name and spirit of Christ. The primary need of every community is a spiritual regeneration which issues in a thoroughgoing social regeneration, namely in better community ideals, better community spirit and better community conditions. . . . This is the test that men are applying today to religion. They are demanding that it make social life better and happier. Per-

sonal and social regeneration must go together if the Kingdom of God is to come.

"Social service in conjunction with all the other functions of the boards—worship, evangelism, and education—has been constantly emphasized as one of the things that accompany salvation and not as something extra and outside of the regular work of the Christian Church. A saved soul in a saved body living in a saved community is the primary aim of all the social service of the Board of Home Missions."

In putting increasing emphasis upon a social program the churches were thus supported by the prevailing trend of the time. That this trend sometimes functioned as a constraining force is indicated by the following quotation from a church bulletin:

"Our treasurer will probably report the bequests that have come to us through the year. The old friends of the Mission who are interested in our religious work are fast passing away; modern philanthropists are not as much concerned with our religious program as they are with the efforts we are making to improve the condition of the poor and find wholesome employment for the leisure hours of children and youth.

"In order to interest persons of wealth of this type, as well as to enlarge our social activities, it would be well for us to consider an advanced program along social lines."

The Polyglot Community

In addition to these general factors—the competition of secular institutions and the social interpretation of Christianity—there were also particular reasons that furnished the inducement for the development of a social program in the work among immigrants. One, for example, was the presence of a polyglot population in a community in which a mission center operated. The organization of a foreign-language church for each nationality was impossible for financial reasons. Some provision had to be made for activities that would not be handicapped by the antagonism which many

of the racial groups felt toward one another, and that would permit the mission worker to have contacts with members of all the different nationalities represented in the community. The usual procedure was to start a social program which would bring the immigrants of different nationalities together in coöperative enterprises, and to organize religious groups among them for which the center could serve as a meeting place.

Opposition to the Social Program

The advantages that a social program offered in attracting young people and in widening the contacts of the church with immigrants were not always recognized by mission workers or by members of the congregation of foreign-language churches. The opposition never took any acute form, but the promoters of the new idea of mission work frequently had to overcome obstacles and misunderstandings. While the opposition to the social program was strongest in the early part of its development, it has not completely subsided even to-day. Many foreign-speaking ministers are still to be found who look down upon the social worker and consider their own task not only more important but also more dignified. Thus, the Italian minister of an institutional church declared: "The churches are stooping down to do social work during the week, but their real work is done on Sunday." This is a typical expression of the defense reactions of ministers against the threat of losing their prominent position in the mission enterprise. This attitude has been the source of much friction, particularly in places where mission workers of the old school are thrown together with recent graduates from theological seminaries. Each tries to minimize the work of the other and they seldom coöperate. The friction is often indicative of a more deep-rooted struggle between two conflicting interpretations of religion—one as a set of doctrines and beliefs, and the other as a way of life.

Another ground of opposition is found in the contention

of some ministers that the social program does not promote the winning of souls. "I doubt the character-building nature of the social program," said one of them, "unless accompanied by religious activities. But the social program interferes with religious work. It may be all right for converted people but it is not a means of winning new members. The attempt to get boys from social clubs into the church has failed absolutely. I came to this place with the idea that social work was the best mission work. Ten years of experience have changed my mind completely." In a similar vein runs the statement of another minister: "I have been in favor of an open-house institutional church for thirty years. I believed in giving the immigrants in the neighborhood free access to social activities, trusting that the contacts I made would bring them eventually into the fold. I have given up this idea because it has failed. I cannot point to one individual who has been won over and has become a faithful Protestant by this method. I have decided to go back to the old ways and give people religion, and not something for nothing."

"I think," exclaimed a Mexican missionary, "that our church with its few members has done a hundred times more for the Kingdom of God among Mexicans than our Christian center with its thousands of participants."

Some state that they are opposed to a social program because it "destroys the wholesomeness of the church atmosphere." "Young people congregate for the lighter things of life. They come for what they can get out of it, particularly for entertainment." Or again: "The church ought to be such in the strict sense; the idea of making a recreational center out of a church is just an indication of its decline as a spiritual force." And, very bluntly: "The social program is just a way of spending a lot of money without having anything to show for it."

The opposition by members of the congregation usually follows similar lines of attack, but it centers for the most part

upon the alleged interference of social activities with church services and the fact that the presence of youngsters prevents the serious business of the church from being carried on effectively.

The opposition to the social program, however, has not prevented it from forging ahead and becoming a dominant feature of the mission work among immigrants.

Description of Social Centers

We have discussed the factors that led to the development of a new policy in home-mission work among immigrants. We shall proceed now with a description of the social centers which were instituted for the realization of this policy, and conclude with an analysis of the results achieved.

Comparisons of fifty home-mission centers carrying on social programs were made in respect to their outstanding characteristics, namely: affiliation with a church, size, equipment, and the features included in the program of activities.

Church Affiliation

So far as affiliation with a church is concerned the following types are to be distinguished:

1. The institutional church. Here the social activities are an integral part of the church program, though not restricted to church-members. The social program is carried on in the church building and is in charge of the head minister.

2. The social center in which a church or church activities, such as Sunday schools and devotional services, are a part of the social program. Most of the Christian Centers and Neighborhood Houses belong to this type.

3. The social center which has no affiliation with a church and has no formal religious program. Its social program is carried on as a community enterprise but it is financed by home-mission funds.

The matter of affiliation with a church has an important

bearing upon the relation of the community to the social center. A center that is definitely a non-sectarian enterprise has the full coöperation and recognition of the community, which takes pride in it and regards it as its own. The favorable attitude of the community to the center in Caspian, Mich., for example, enables its leader to draw for support upon all classes of the population, upon the municipal and state authorities, and upon representatives of civic institutions and of churches, regardless of denomination. The center plays a dominant rôle in the community and its leader is invested with positions of public trust.

The centers that are affiliated with a church, on the other hand, are handicapped to a greater or less degree, dependent upon their emphasis on religion, by a lack of community interest and support and, not infrequently, by opposition. This handicap is less pronounced in the larger centers, particularly in the big cities where the religious features of the work are less in evidence because of the variety and extent of the purely social activities. While centers with church affiliations have on the whole no difficulty in securing participants for their program, they fail to become integral parts of the community or to secure its recognition and confidence. "Our great problem," said the head of a Christian Center, "is how to overcome the aloofness and indifference of the community to our institution. They don't mind taking what we have to offer to them if it does not involve any obligation on their part. But they do not give us their whole-hearted support and often show a suspicious and hostile attitude." Because of their connection with a church not recognized in the community, the social centers of the first and second type cannot play a significant part in community affairs. Like the foreign-language church, they remain "outside" the community.

Size and Equipment

Except in the institutional churches, the social centers are housed in special buildings adapted to the purpose of carry-

ing on a social program. These buildings vary in size, ranging from imposing structures like the Olivet Institute, in Chicago, to two-room houses like the center in Brighton, Colorado. About half of the centers are housed in medium-sized structures, usually two-story buildings, having a small library, a gymnasium and five to seven rooms for club work, classes and social gatherings. The larger centers, in addition, have workshops, swimming pools and sometimes dispensaries or clinics.

Among the centers that were studied it was found that the institutional churches, with a few exceptions, notably the Halsted Institutional Church, in Chicago, were the least adequately equipped of all. Most of the churches are housed in old buildings to start with and no remodeling short of complete reconstruction could adapt them to the requirements of a social program. The rooms for group activities are meagrely equipped, and unsatisfactory from a hygienic and æsthetic point of view. The basement or some hall usually serves as an improvised gymnasium.

The centers which were especially designed to accommodate a social program have, on the whole, more adequate facilities for athletics, scouting and club work. But only the large centers, particularly the Presbyterian Neighborhood Houses in Chicago, which have greater financial resources at their disposal, have an equipment sufficiently modern and complete to compare with the non-sectarian enterprises organized by the community or by such institutions as the Y. M. C. A.

Features of the Social Program

The clubs for boys and girls are the units with which the social program of every home-mission center primarily deals. Play, study, work and entertainment are carried on in groups. Every participant of the center is made to join one of the groups, and only as a club-member can he enjoy the privileges of the center. Only two centers were found that carried

on an open-door policy, permitting young people to utilize the building for play or work at their leisure. In most centers boys and girls attend the center only at the regular hours assigned to the clubs to which they belong. Since these clubs meet as a rule only once or twice a week, the contact of the center with its participants is limited to the few hours in which they engage in supervised club activities. Although they belong to a center, the greater part of the leisure time of the young people is spent outside of it—in gangs, in play on the street and so forth. The large number of participants in the social centers makes this more or less inevitable; but the personal contacts between leader and participant are thereby limited, and as a result the influence of the center often fails to counteract effectively the disorganizing influences which unsupervised leisure activities tend to have upon the conduct and outlook upon life of young people in certain neighborhoods. Many cases, for example, were observed where boys who were members of a club in a mission center were also members of some neighborhood gang notorious for its mischief and delinquent behavior. Unless participation in the center absorbs the interest of young people, there is little ground for expecting that the influence exerted will be strong enough to carry over into their contacts and relationships the tendencies and viewpoints that the center tries to promote.

The clubs are usually organized around some natural play group whose members join as a body. Such activities as athletics, arts and crafts (carpentering, sewing, etc.) and play are provided, and there is usually keen competition for honors. The clubs are self-governing units, but they operate under the supervision and leadership of a staff member or a volunteer experienced in work with boys or girls. The number of clubs varies according to the size of the center. In the fifty centers surveyed the number ranged from two to twenty, with five clubs as the average. The average membership in

a club is fifteen, except for special organizations such as scout troops, orchestras and dramatic societies which have a larger membership.

Classes

In addition to club activities, which are found in the social program of every center, most of the centers conduct special classes in which languages, music, arts and crafts are taught. In centers equipped with adequate workshops and special class-rooms the classes constitute an important part of the social program. The opportunities for occupational and professional training that the centers provide through the offering of classes to the underprivileged is one of the most significant ways in which they serve the community.

The Nursery and Kindergarten

Seventy per cent of the centers surveyed have a day nursery or kindergarten. The primary object of these institutions is to help mothers who have to go out to work. The children are cared for during the day, provided with food and clothing when necessary, and are taught to play and sing. Another purpose behind the organization of nurseries and kindergartens is revealed in the following statement by the head of an institutional church: "We hope that our work of winning the children of Catholic immigrants for the church will be greatly facilitated if we get hold of them at an early age when they can be easily impressed and guided." There is little evidence to show, however, that this purpose has met with any measure of realization. While Catholic parents willingly send their children to the centers, believing that "they are taught good things," as one of them expressed it, they take care that their children are not alienated from their church. After the children reach the age of six or seven they are sent to the Catholic church to be prepared for communion. Here the impressions made by the center are largely

obliterated, and many of the children never return. Those who continue to participate in the programs of the center become aware, as they grow older, of the problem involved in a change of religion. Urged to make a decision, they refuse to commit themselves. Many interviews with young people who grew up in the centers have shown that, although many of them are favorably disposed toward Protestantism, their feeling for it is not sufficiently strong to overcome their unwillingness to face a conflict with their social environment, particularly their family.

Other Features

Clubs, classes, nurseries and kindergartens constitute the main features of the social program of home-mission centers. In many centers the regular program is supplemented by lectures, concerts, social gatherings, sports, motion pictures and other forms of entertainment. Most of these features are designed for the participants in the centers, but some events, such as the celebration of national holidays, presentation of folk dances and musicales, are staged as community enterprises.

Special mention must also be made of the free medical and legal aid for the community at large which is given by 30 per cent of the centers and through which a very valuable social service is rendered. Many centers also function as relief agencies in the community and the workers at the center are often called upon to advise and help in the solution of personal problems of adjustment.

Religious Program

Sunday services, Sunday schools, Bible classes and religious discussion groups are included in the program of 90 per cent of the centers surveyed. In comparison with the educational and recreational features offered by the centers the religious program occupies a secondary position, for only about one-tenth of the time of the average participant in the center is

taken up by some feature of the religious program. The various home-mission centers differ in the emphasis that they put upon religious training. In 60 per cent of the centers attendance at some feature of the religious program is compulsory, while other centers limit themselves to the practice of starting club activities more or less regularly with a religious or moral talk by the leader. In 40 per cent of the centers, including most of the institutional churches and Christian centers, religious instruction is of a formal nature and an effort is made to inculcate in young people the doctrines and beliefs of the church. In other centers a broader interpretation of Christianity as a way of living is usually the main theme.

Results of the Social Program

We recall that the purposes for which the social program was instituted were: (1) To hold the interest and insure the active participation in the church of young people who are already Protestants; (2) to win new members, and (3) to build character. To what extent has the social program succeeded in realizing these ends?

Effect on Protestant Young People

It is the foreign-language institutional church in particular that has set itself the task of keeping young people in active membership by means of the social program. The offering of sports, social gatherings, club activities and so forth as part of the church program has undoubtedly stimulated the interest of young people in their church. A comparison was made of the membership of young people in institutional churches with the membership in churches that have no social program. It was found that a church that has enlivened its routine program with activities of a social and recreational nature has a larger percentage of young people than a church that only carries on Sunday services and prayer-meetings. "I

belonged to the church of another denomination before," said the president of the Young People's Union of a Baptist Italian church, "but the minister and the congregation objected to a social program and even refused to sanction a social hour to follow the Christian Endeavor meetings. Many of the young people drifted away, with the result that this church, which had been the largest Italian church in the city, is now almost the smallest." The Baptist church to which the young man now belongs has a dramatic club, a basketball and a baseball team, a scout band and social gatherings after religious meetings. Of the hundred members enrolled in various young people's groups seventy are active members of the church.

This example illustrates the general observation that a church with an extensive social program encourages participation in church activities by the children of church-members. The extent of this participation will depend upon the adequacy of the leadership and the degree to which the social program leads to the formation of primary group relationships among the participants. For where the leader can win the confidence and respect of the young people, and where he understands their problems and knows how to stimulate their interests, allegiance to him becomes an important factor in maintaining the interest of youth in the church. And where the individual's desires for social contacts are satisfied and his social interests absorbed in the group life fostered by the church, adherence to the church is materially strengthened.

Amicable relationships with the older generation also have an influence on the extent of the participation of young people in church activities. A center is handicapped in its effort to hold the young people if the older generation opposes their modes of living as unconventional and in conflict with strict codes of puritanical ethics and with other-worldly ideals. This opposition frequently leads to an antagonistic and intolerant

attitude toward young people which alienates them from the church. The following example well illustrates the point. "I am an old-fashioned minister," said the pastor of an Italian church, "and for many years I have fought against the worldly tendencies of our young people—their conformity to fashion, their ideas of a good time. The older members have supported me and urged me on. But I was losing my young people one after another. I finally realized that the only way to get along with youth and make them stay in church is to oppose extremes but to be tolerant toward behavior that is not strictly conventional but really not harmful. I could not convince some of my old members and they left me." "I have ceased going to church," said a young Pole, "and so have my friends, because the old people objected to our innocent pleasures such as smoking and dancing and we got sick of doing these things on the sly." "I wanted to become a prize fighter and I took boxing lessons. The old people disapproved and said that a baptized man cannot be a boxer. I got disgusted and left the church."

Where a tolerant attitude toward youth prevails, where leadership is adequate and where the groups formed within the church are congenial and offer the individual an opportunity for self-expression, the social program to some extent fulfills the expectation of being a means for promoting the adherence to the church of the children of members. But it does not offer a complete solution to the problem of counteracting the growing lack of interest in church activities on the part of young people. This is due first of all to the fact that the social program, particularly in the larger cities, cannot compete with the inducement offered by commercialized amusements and by institutions that specialize in offering well-equipped and modern recreational facilities. The social centers of the churches are limited to the more conventional types of social activities, and in most cases have only scant equipment for recreational activities at their disposal. In con-

sequence, the social program of the churches does not succeed in stemming the drift of young people away from the church, since they find elsewhere more adequate response to their desires for entertainment.

Secondly, participation of young people in the social program of a church does not necessarily enlarge or deepen their religious interest. Many ministers complain that their young people become entirely absorbed by social activities and want as little as possible of religion. "They come for entertainments and socials," said one minister, "but they neglect to come to church or religious meetings." Another minister complains of the "worldly tendencies of youth, their critical attitude toward religion and scepticism toward authority," which makes it impossible to exercise a vital religious influence. In these cases the contacts with the church through the social program at best remain superficial.

Thirdly, the attraction of the social program is not sufficient to overcome the unwillingness of many young people to associate themselves with an institution, such as the foreign-language church, which stresses their descent and forces them to identify themselves with an immigrant group. The children of Protestantized immigrants are no exception to the rule that second-generation immigrants are often ashamed to admit their descent and that they want to dissociate themselves from the immigrant community and prefer contacts with outside groups. The foreign-language churches attempt to overcome the young people's reluctance to identify themselves with an immigrant enterprise by changing into English-speaking churches. This solution, however, is not radical enough as long as these churches persist in serving some particular nationality group, and so continue to emphasize descent. The point is illustrated by the case of a home-mission center where the second generation obtained control of the government. This center recently discarded its name as an Italian Baptist church and established itself as an Ameri-

can church by seeking the participation of all who cared to join regardless of nationality.

In view of the fact that the foreign-language church has little attraction for the younger generation, it might reasonably be expected that the children of Protestantized immigrants would tend to join American churches. No such tendency, however, is in evidence. Few American churches without a foreign-language "department" are reported to have second-generation immigrants in their membership. This is partly due to the fact that the young people are not encouraged to join American churches, for the minister and their parents are anxious to retain them in their own church. But in greater part the reluctance of many American churches to welcome immigrants into their membership is responsible for the disinclination of the younger generation to join the American churches. The following comments are typical of many complaints that were heard in the course of interviews with young people. "I wanted to join the N. Church," said a young Italian, "but I was discouraged. They treated me coldly and I was made to feel that I was not welcome." A young Hungarian stated: "I have joined an American church in the neighborhood, but I do not feel at home. I somehow cannot fit into the group. I feel like a stranger all the time. For my social life I come to the Hungarian church where I find a friendly atmosphere and where I know I am welcome."

In view of the state of affairs revealed by these comments, it is clear that the young people of foreign parentage can be brought into the American churches in greater numbers only after a radical change in the attitude of the average American church toward the immigrant.

Gaining New Members

We have discussed the social program in relation to the children of Protestant and Protestantized parents, and have

seen that it has introduced more vitality into the churches and has helped to some extent in retaining young people in church-membership. We have now to inquire how far the objective of obtaining new members for the church from among the children of Catholic immigrants has been realized.

The social program has undoubtedly had the desired effect of bringing the Protestant church into contact with Catholic young people who are willing enough to come to the social centers to enjoy the recreational and educational privileges offered them. The great majority of the children and young people in home-mission centers, other than the institutional church, come from Catholic homes. But the social centers have failed to become the desired "feeders" for the church. Most of the centers studied report no accession into church-membership from among their participants. Some report an occasional conversion. But the number of new members that are gained for the church is wholly insignificant when compared to the large flow of children and young people through the social centers. A single institution in Chicago claims an annual attendance of more than one hundred thousand. It is interesting to note in this connection that the membership in the church which is associated with this institution has been steadily decreasing, in spite of the rapid increase in the number of participants in its social program.

The reason for the failure of the social program to win members for the church seems to lie in the same causes which we showed in the last chapter to be responsible for the inability of the immigrant churches to expand beyond a certain limit. Added to these is the great difficulty of stimulating a religious interest in young people, most of whom are not mature enough to appreciate a discussion on religious matters. They come to the social centers for the good time and the educational benefits that they derive from participation in the social programs; but they show no concern for doctrinal points and are indifferent to controversial issues of faith which

are presented to them in Bible classes or religious discussion groups.

Character-building

By offering educational and recreational opportunities to the underprivileged and making it possible for the young people to spend their time wholesomely and under supervision, the social centers undoubtedly fulfil a valuable character-building function, particularly in cases where the center is able to play an important rôle in the life of the individual because his interests are absorbed in the center or because of allegiance to some leader. Where the faithful participation of the individual has been assured the centers in many cases are able to promote the development of socialized habits, prepare the individual to perform better his social obligations and direct his activities into productive channels. In the fifty social centers that were surveyed it was found that this would apply to about 20 per cent of the total number of participants. Those centers are most successful in their character-building efforts in which the facilities and the leadership are such that an intensive personal influence can be exerted on the individual. To the extent to which the social centers are able to perform this function they tend to counteract the disorganizing influences to which the young people living in an unstable environment are subjected. And in promoting appreciation of the values and attitudes that are necessary for an adequate community life they also indirectly exercise a constructive and beneficial influence in the community in which they operate.

A Neighborhood House, which has served a polyglot community in Chicago for over forty years, summarizes the accomplishments of its work as follows:

"1. Many thousands of lives of young people of both sexes have been touched into cleaner and fuller life and been given kinds

and qualities of training that have fitted them for the higher types of citizenship.

"2. Several hundreds of young men and women have been inspired and assisted to rise to the higher levels of social service as business and professional men, kindergartners, nurses, teachers, and preachers, who otherwise in all probability would never have found the rungs of the ladder of life.

"3. Many thousands of lives, idle and undirected, have been turned into channels of usefulness and trained into volunteer services for church and state and society at large."

An evaluation like this is difficult to prove, for while the record of former participants may sustain it, the influence of factors other than the contacts with a center must be discounted and a comparison be made with the record of a sufficiently large sample of individuals of similar background who have never come under the influence of social centers. But the testimony of members, in the social centers that were surveyed, as to the value of the training and stimulation which they are receiving, and the cases on record which show how individuals have been helped in making better adjustments and in improving their behavior through participation in supervised group activities, indicate that the degree of truth in the above statement is sufficiently large to sustain the general validity of the claim. Since this evaluation holds true to a greater or less degree for the accomplishments of other social centers, it can therefore serve as an illustration of the results of the establishment of social programs by the churches.

At the same time the fact should not be ignored that many of the young people who come to the centers are not "problem cases" and that, therefore, credit for their good behavior and their social amenities cannot be claimed by the centers, but must be given to their homes, their school and their individual dispositions. Since many of its participants are well-adjusted and well-behaved the center, except in special

cases, does not function as a character-*building* agency, but performs a character-*sustaining* task by furnishing the individual with surroundings in which he can exercise his best qualities and in which he is least exposed to disorganizing influences.

But the effectiveness of the social centers under home-mission auspices in helping young people and in promoting better conditions of living in the community is shared in equal manner by non-sectarian institutions such as the Y. M. C. A., social settlements, community centers and so forth. The rôle which the home-mission centers play in promoting character-building and the improvement of social relationships is, therefore, not an exceptional one. The widely held opinion in home-mission circles that the social centers under church auspices are more effective in building character has never been substantiated. Since this question involves many intangibles that defy measurement and make comparison difficult, it is doubtful whether a definite decision can ever be given. The assertions usually made by the leaders of the home-mission movement maintain, as one of them expressed it, that "we can do much more than the social settlements because our workers are consecrated to service and aim to exercise a personal influence on young people with whom they come in contact, and because we bring young people into touch with religion and create a more inspiring atmosphere in our centers." Such assertions ignore the fact that there are many workers in non-sectarian institutions who are also guided by the motive of service and who exert a profound moral and spiritual influence on young people, while, on the other hand, there are many workers in church institutions who hold their jobs as a means of making a living and who go about them in a routine and uninspired manner. They also ignore the fact that home-mission centers are under the same disadvantage as the secular institutions, since they have to deal with large masses of individuals, and this neces-

sitates a great deal of routine handling of groups and of businesslike procedure in the conduct of the activities of the centers. Furthermore, in dealing with Catholics, the leaders of home-mission centers, unlike non-sectarian leaders, are under the handicap of stressing their Protestantism, which must necessarily constitute something of a barrier between them and the young people and act to lessen the personal influence they might otherwise have.

The social program of the home-mission centers and of the non-sectarian institutions is very much the same, except that the latter do not provide for formal religious education, although they do aim at the development of an appreciation of moral and social values through discussion groups and personal contacts of leaders with participants. To substantiate the claim that home-mission centers, because of their religious program, are exercising a greater character-building and character-sustaining influence than the non-sectarian institutions, very elaborate researches must be undertaken. The difficulty of measuring matters of this kind so far has made it impossible to arrive at any definite conclusions. Some clues, based upon general observation, are available which tend to indicate that if the home-mission centers exercise a greater influence on their participants because of the teaching of religion, that influence does not play so important a rôle as some are inclined to assign to it. First, there was the opinion, expressed by some of the leaders interviewed, to the effect that "no thoroughgoing results in dealing with individuals by mass methods" have been accomplished in their centers, which has led them to advocate the teaching of religion through "personal and intimate contacts with participants." Secondly, religious instruction in most centers is given at compulsory meetings, which precede the activities for which the young people gather in the centers, and under these conditions it appears doubtful whether this instruction can be sufficiently effective. In this connection the comment

of a Neighborhood-house worker is significant: "The religious meetings do not seem to impress the youngsters very much. They listen to the talks, they pray and learn Bible verses by heart, but they are not responsive. They just seem to take it all as routine matter. How differently they act when the hour is over and the time has come for games and sports! Then they are all pepped up and enthusiastic." That this statement reflects a widespread condition is confirmed by many observations made in the course of this investigation of the behavior of participants in the religious activities at various centers.

But it is not so important to settle the question of whether the social centers organized by the churches exercise a greater or less influence than the non-sectarian institutions, as to recognize that the two types of organization together are filling a vital need in the community in ameliorating conditions in underprivileged sections. The churches not only supplement the work of the other institutions in larger cities, but they have been pioneers in communities where no other social institutions had been established, particularly in mining regions of Pennsylvania, the Iron Range in Michigan, and in rural districts of California and Colorado.

CHAPTER IV

Leadership and Organization

In analyzing the results of the work of Protestant churches among Catholic immigrants the point has been stressed that a definite limit is set to the expansion of the work as a whole. We have found this limit to be determined primarily by the opposition of the community, by the loyalty of many immigrants to the ancestral church, by the religious indifference of others and by the fear of losing status through a change of religion. Because of these obstacles only a limited number of individuals can be counted upon as prospective members for the Protestant church, and only a restricted influence can be exercised in immigrant communities.

Reasons for Variation in Results

While a fixed limit exists for the work as a whole, the possibilities of expansion of mission work are not the same in individual immigrant communities and vary according to leadership and special circumstances.

Absence of Unified Public Opinion

Some communities offer greater opportunity for expansion than others. Among the factors that furnish a more favorable basis for missionary efforts the most important is the absence of a unified public opinion on the relationship between national loyalty and church affiliations. This is illustrated by the case of Czech communities in which mission work has been relatively more successful than in communities of other nationalities. We find that, for reasons

inherent in the cultural background of the Czechs, public opinion in Czech communities is least unified on the issue of the relationship between loyalty to the national group and church affiliation. The Catholic church lost its religious supremacy in Bohemia during the Protestant revolt led by Jan Hus in the fourteenth century. While the counter-reformation restored Bohemia to Catholicism, it never succeeded in regaining a strong hold over the Czechs or in reëstablishing its position as a national religion.

Protestant traditions continued to exercise an influence and prevented the formation of a uniform public opinion relating nationality to religion. The diversity of opinion on this issue among Czechs in their homeland was further increased in America, where opposition to Catholicism developed into a widespread "free-thinker" movement, which became organized into a national alliance and found many followers in every Czech immigrant community. The split in public opinion brought about by this movement, and the prevalence of Protestant traditions gave to the individual greater freedom in following his own inclinations in religious matters. Loyalty to the group was less bound to church affiliations than in communities where a strong unified public opinion on the religious issue prevailed. In consequence, the promotion of Protestantism encountered fewer obstacles among the Czechs than among other nationalities, and many adherents were won by the mission enterprise from among those who were dissatisfied with the Catholic church but unwilling to follow the Free Thinkers in their denial of religion.

Lack of unified opinion as to national and church loyalties has also favored the promotion of mission work among the Italians, although to a considerably lesser degree than among the Czechs. The Waldensian movement in Italy, unlike the Hussite reformation in Bohemia, did not weaken in any appreciable way the religious supremacy of the Catholic church. But among the Italians the conflict between State and Church

furthered the missionary cause, for it divided Italians into opposing camps, the more intensely patriotic retaining only a nominal allegiance to the Catholic church. This group, although it did not openly encourage evangelization, did not regard a break with the church as an act of national disloyalty. In Italian communities, in which the opposing camps were equally strong, resistance to evangelization for social reasons was lessened, for a convert or participant in an Italian Protestant mission center could count on some support in his community. The fear of losing social position under these circumstances was less pronounced than in communities where opposition to change of religion was unified.

Such unified opposition prevails, for example, in Hungarian and Polish communities. Protestant traditions among immigrants from Hungary, where opposition to the Catholic church expressed itself in the development of a powerful Reformed church, was stronger even than among the Czechs. Since most Hungarian immigrant communities are half Reformed and half Catholic a favorable ground for missionary work might be expected to exist. But the mission enterprise was handicapped to a greater degree among the Hungarians than among the Czechs by the opposition of the Reformed church to the mission work of American Protestant churches, for the Reformed church considers itself as the only legitimate agency for the evangelization of the Hungarians. The Reformed Hungarians succeeded in unifying public opinion to a considerable degree against the missionary churches by taking sides with the Catholic Hungarians in condemning the joining of a mission church as an act of disloyalty. The mission churches were able to win adherents among Hungarians in appreciable numbers only because internal conflicts, and the discontinuance of needed support by the church in Hungary since the beginning of the World War, weakened the Reformed church considerably and caused a wide-

spread dissatisfaction which led a number of Hungarians to join American mission churches.

Among the Poles, unified opinion on the relationship between national loyalty and affiliation with the Catholic church is stronger than with any other nationality, because of the rôle that the Catholic church has played in maintaining Polish traditions and national sentiments after the partition of Poland. It even handicaps the development of the National Polish church, which is an indigenous movement against Roman Catholicism among Poles in this country. In consequence, Poles have resisted stubbornly any attempt to evangelize them. Numerous centers have been started among them and all but a few had to discontinue their efforts because of the unresponsiveness of the Poles. The number of Poles who have been converted through years of effort is negligible, and members of the National church have been just as reluctant to join mission churches as the Roman Catholics. Some adherents were gained from among the Polish socialists who were in opposition to their community and sometimes joined Protestant churches as an expression of revolt against the dominant groups, an act which was not always associated with religious conviction.

Degree of Integration of the Community

Another factor that furnishes a more favorable basis for missionary efforts is the relatively small degree of integration in a given community. Where the group is less integrated, social control is less stringent and the individual has greater freedom in following his own inclinations. This is the case, for example, in polyglot communities where social coherence tends to be weak; and also in communities that are in process of formation and where, in consequence, means of control cannot be effectively applied. Here is at any rate a partial explanation of the relative success which mission work has

had in the early periods of immigration. Finally, a more favorable basis is furnished in highly mobile communities. Great mobility is particularly a characteristic of Mexican communities. Most of the Mexicans find employment in seasonal occupations and are consequently forced to move frequently from place to place. This mobility has led to the disorganization of the religious life of many Mexicans, particularly since the Catholic church has not attempted to meet the exigency of the situation and to provide adequately for the religious needs of migrants. The Protestant missionaries followed the Mexicans as they moved from place to place to their centers of work and established temporary mission centers wherever a greater number of migrants gathered. Since these centers tried to be of general service to the migrant communities in addition to propagating the Protestant faith, many Mexicans were brought into contact with Protestantism who could not have been reached otherwise.

The Importance of Leadership

Leadership is important in any field of social activity, but it is of particular significance in mission work, the success of which is not merely a matter of the efficient management and organization of an enterprise, but depends primarily upon the ability of the leader to establish personal contacts, to influence people and to win their allegiance.

In an attempt to ascertain what qualifications are responsible for the successful conduct of a mission center, a comparison was made of the leadership of mission centers, with a similar program and equipment, which had worked approximately the same length of time for the same nationality, but which showed a wide discrepancy in the numbers of their adherents. Observations of the conduct of leaders in these centers and interviews with members and participants furnished the material for making the comparison.

It was ascertained that religious fervor and an energetic

"going after" members are not sufficient to ensure success. Wherever a leader was successful it was found that his personal qualities were such that they had won for him the confidence and respect of those with whom he came into contact. These qualities include tolerance and sympathetic understanding of others, intelligence and persuasiveness, kindness in dealing with people and willingness to be of service to them, and an impressive personal appearance. Successful leaders were found to have not only the devoted support of their followers but also general recognition by the community on account of their personal qualities, regardless of whether the mission work itself was approved or not. Many immigrants not connected with the center avail themselves of the advice and help of such men, and they are called upon to take an active part in community functions.

Moreover, as was revealed in interviews with members and participants, the joining of mission centers or participation in their activities is very often a matter of personal allegiance to the leader. Nearly one-half of more than one hundred persons interviewed stated definitely that they joined the center out of regard for the leader. Conversely, many cases are on record of members discontinuing their affiliation with the church after the departure of a given leader, while it was found that centers that frequently change leaders, with the result that no feeling of allegiance has time to develop, are likely to fail.

Characteristics of Leadership in Mission Centers

Lack of adequate leadership and the difficulty of remedying this deficiency have been the most serious problems that the mission enterprise among immigrants has had to face. The problem is still acute, particularly in the foreign-language churches, although conditions as regards leadership have somewhat improved in recent years as a result of the establishment of special training schools and seminaries for the

ministry among foreign-born, and the opportunity for better selection of candidates from among the second generation that has grown up under the influence of Protestantism.

The Early Period

When the Protestant churches launched their experiment of evangelizing the Catholic immigrant, they went about it in a haphazard manner. Centers were started in rapid succession without a previous survey of the need and of the possibility of mission work, and without plan and preparation. The chief concern was to get into action. Overzealous enthusiasm characterized the movement in its beginning and resulted in a great waste of funds and energy. Very little consideration was given to the proper selection and training of leaders for the field. As center after center was opened the demand for workers who could speak the languages of the national groups that were to be served was so great that it was often sufficient for an immigrant to show willingness to work among his people to be put in charge of some mission center. A ministry was recruited from among people of peasant background and of limited Protestant experience. They were untrained in the conduct of mission work, and in many cases uneducated and deficient in personal qualifications that would enable them to win the respect and confidence of the immigrants with whom they came into contact.

Some of those entering the ministry were opportunists who seized upon the rôle of the missionary as the best way of making a living and obtaining security. Others found in the ministry a satisfaction of their desire to raise their social status. Cases are reported which show how some came to look upon themselves as a sort of gentry. They tried to impress their compatriots with their authority and standing and often exhibited arrogance. Many instances are related of how they tried to dominate the lives of their flock after the pattern of the village priest in their homeland.

Many, of course, were moved by genuine religious feelings; they were eager to convert and to be of service to the community; but their enthusiasm was not sufficient to make up for the deficiency in their training and education. They were unequal to the task confronting them and unable to make much headway. The damage done to the mission cause by inefficient leadership can only be surmised. That it was considerable can be gathered from the numerous reports of ministers in the field that it has taken them many years to overcome the bad effect and the unfavorable impression that some previous worker in the center had produced in the community.

One indication of the problem presented by the question of leadership is the large turnover in the ministry of foreign-language churches. A study of the records of thirty such churches, complete for the whole period of their operation, shows that the average number of years that a minister was employed in their service at any one time was a little more than three. One hundred and seven ministers served a total of 338 years. Of these ministers, seven served less than one year; sixty-three served from one to three years; nineteen from four to six years; ten from seven to nine years, and eight ministers served ten years or more.

It is of interest to note the reasons for this turnover in ministers. Of forty-six ministers in whose cases the reasons could be ascertained, nine left the ministry to engage in other occupations; twenty were dismissed on various grounds, more or less discreditable; eleven left the center because they became embroiled in conflicts with the congregation, or because they felt that the community persecuted them beyond endurance; six were called away to other centers.

Accurate data on the training of foreign-language ministers in the past are not available, but all indications point to the fact that it was very inadequate. Some light on the question is thrown by statistics on the training of ministers who are

to-day in charge of mission centers. For in spite of the considerable improvement brought about by the adoption some time ago of a policy of rigid selection and training of personnel, we find that out of 114 ministers, 15.7 per cent had no professional training and 24.6 per cent had neither college nor seminary training.

The Later Period

The policy of opening centers without plan and preparation, particularly as to the selection of qualified leaders, undoubtedly was the expression of a widespread confidence by mission leaders in the inevitability of a movement toward Protestantism by Catholic immigrants: in the words of one of the early pioneers of mission work, "these poor and downtrodden peoples are eager for our message, and all we need is to preach the Word and show them the way of deliverance and they will rally to the church."

But the expected movement did not materialize and the difficulties of mission work became increasingly apparent. For some time optimism was maintained by glowing reports from the field of great achievements and large attendances, arrived at in most cases by counting as members those who came to obtain relief and assistance. Evidence showing the precariousness of the situation was, however, accumulating. In the first place, as missionaries and ministers changed from one center to another, many a new pastor would be able to find only three or four of the previously reported fifty or sixty members of a church or mission. Secondly, troubles arising in various congregations sometimes split churches into antagonistic factions and led to careful investigation. Thirdly, the persistent agitation of ministers for continued support of their work, in spite of its comparatively unfavorable showings, on the basis that other workers made untrue representations, started investigations which substantiated these charges. Finally, there were the reports of ministers who made no

effort to disguise the situation as it actually existed, which showed that some of the work was meeting with complete failure.

One of the first steps taken to improve conditions was the development of closer supervision of the work by specially appointed bodies. But it was soon realized that not much could be done unless the quality of the leadership was improved. Proper recruiting and training of field workers became the main concern of the mission enterprise.

The practice of appointing individuals for mission work upon their expressed desire to enter the field was largely discontinued. Ministers were instructed to recommend only the most promising individuals in their charge, and a careful study of the record of an applicant and of his ability was made. The better educated and more cultured were sought from among immigrants whose fidelity to Protestantism was unquestionable. A premium was put upon young men who grew up in this country, but who could speak the tongue of their fathers, and who could be effective in bridging the gap between the first and the second generation of immigrants. Scholarships to colleges and seminaries were made available to promising individuals.

The educational facilities for the training of the foreign-speaking ministry were developed gradually, accompanied by much trial and error. Difficulties were encountered in organization of the curriculum, procuring suitable teachers and finding a sufficient number of students. The Baptists, for example, did most extensive work with the Poles and proceeded to establish a Polish seminary at Buffalo, which was then the center of the work. Some of the leading ministers of the locality were asked to do the teaching, and the school started out rather well. But the Polish work in Buffalo and vicinity did not prosper and the need for the seminary there began to diminish. Reports of promising results with the Poles in Chicago offered a timely escape for the seminary to

that city, where the enrollment of a mere handful of students made it an expensive proposition. The Baptists also instituted an Italian department at Colgate University in Rochester and organized a Hungarian seminary in Cleveland. Finally, all of the foreign departments were brought together into the Baptist International Seminary at East Orange, New Jersey. Recently the Baptists opened a Spanish seminary in Los Angeles for the education of their Spanish-speaking ministry. Similarly, the Presbyterians experimented with the establishment of seminaries for foreign-speaking workers until a merger was effected with the founding of Bloomfield Seminary, at Bloomfield, New Jersey. Provision for training immigrant mission workers was also made by various American seminaries and training schools, through the introduction of a special curriculum to provide for the training of foreign-speaking ministers.

The following is a representative list of schools which offer courses outlined by the evangelical denominations for the education of their ministry for immigrant work:

Colgate University;[1] International Seminary; Baptist Spanish Seminary; Baptist Training School; Baptist Southern Theological Seminary; Northern Baptist Seminary; Northfield Bible Training School; Newton Theological Institute; Biblical Seminary of New York; Presbyterian College of Christian Education; Bloomfield Seminary; Graduate School for Social and Religious Workers of Baltimore; Dubuque University; Chicago Training School; Lydia Patterson Institute; Gardenia School for Boys; Genessee Wesleyan Seminary; School of Religious Education and Social Work of Boston University; Garrett Biblical Institute; Moody Bible Institute.

Most of these institutions are carrying on their work exclusively in English. Some of the ministers have supplemented their work in the schools with a year's course at institutions

[1] Italian Department now incorporated in the International Seminary.

like Union Theological Seminary, Drew Theological Seminary, the theological seminaries of Northwestern University, University of Chicago or University of Southern California. A few men have obtained degrees from the last-mentioned institutions.

Careful selection of new candidates and their subsequent training have considerably improved the quality of leadership in mission centers. But the problem has by no means been solved. A sample study of 114 ministers shows that only a little over half have had seminary training, and only 11.4 per cent took a full college course. But the problem of finding a sufficient number of adequately trained foreign ministers is overshadowed by the difficulty of selecting the kind of individuals capable of making the most of the possibilities for mission work in a district. Few of the ministers in the field are equipped with the qualities necessary to carry out a difficult task of leadership, and not much improvement can be expected so long as the number of superior individuals among immigrants that become Protestant remains very small. The continuance of mission work ultimately depends upon the chance of winning the best of the second generation of immigrants born in this country that have grown up in Protestantism. Some of the descendants of Protestantized parents have entered the ministry. We find, on the basis of a sample study of one hundred ministers, that about 10 per cent of the foreign-language ministers to-day are native-born of foreign parentage.

But the chances of winning the superior individuals among the American-born Protestant children of immigrants are not promising. The leaders of mission centers have encountered great difficulties in inducing young people of ability to enter the ministry. They are attracted by positions more remunerative and influential. "In our work it is not sufficient to be willing to preach the Gospel," said an Italian minister; "intelligence and personality are needed. But the young people

in my church who have these qualities do not contemplate the ministry as a profession; they are more attracted by business or want to be physicians and engineers." The low salaries paid to ministers in immigrant mission centers is undoubtedly one of the deterrent factors. The salaries paid in most of the mission centers are inadequate and do not invite the grade of workers demanded by the work. Of seventy ministers who reported on their salaries, 17 per cent received less than $1,000, and 47 per cent between $1,000 and $2,000 a year.

Another deterring factor is the lack of religious interest among young people. The following statement of a mission leader is typical of the comments on this point heard in the course of the investigation: "I seldom find among young people a strong religious fervor that would lead them to sacrifice their worldly ambitions and opportunities for the sake of ministering the Gospel. And those few who show religious enthusiasm unfortunately do not always possess the necessary qualifications and would probably make poor ministers."

The principal difficulty, however, in inducing young people to enter the ministry is the feeling that the ministry to the foreign-born and their descendants is insecure. They recognize that they will be financially more or less at the mercy of the mission boards, whose continuous support cannot be regarded as certain. In various ways they expressed in interviews their awareness of the fact that, as Americanization progresses and the life of the immigrants becomes stabilized, the chances of winning a large following that will make a self-supporting church are diminishing. In short, they see no future in the mission enterprise and do not therefore want to commit themselves to it or make it their life work.

Leadership in Social Centers

The situation as to leadership in social centers is somewhat different from that in the foreign-language churches. Since

the social program as a part of the mission enterprise was inaugurated much later than church work, care was taken from the beginning to employ only properly trained workers. However, the low salaries paid and the requirement frequently made that the social workers employed be actively interested in religion, make it difficult for churches to secure adequate leadership for institutions under their auspices. The complaint is frequently advanced by directors of social centers that they have difficulty in finding people "who are consecrated and willing to look upon their work as service to a great cause rather than as a profession."

Leadership is also less adequate because of the turnover in social workers, which is not inconsiderable and in some centers runs as high as 40 per cent. This is partly the result of dissatisfaction among the workers. "I am going to leave at the first opportunity which offers," was a confession not infrequently encountered in interviews with social workers. They object to small pay, and to being dominated by ministers who, they assert, do not understand their problem; and they are discouraged by conflicts arising over the conduct of their work, as when the opinions of those who insist on religious training and conversion clash with the opinions of others who want to keep religious and social work apart. On the whole, however, the work in social centers is conducted efficiently.

The staff of most social centers, excluding the volunteer workers, is manned by persons trained in the particular field of activity in which they engage, and some have had a college education. In contrast to the foreign-language churches, whatever deficiencies there are in the social centers are seldom attributable to incompetent leadership, but are in most cases due to inadequate equipment and an insufficient number of workers.

General Aspects of Organization

Supervision

The mission centers operating among Catholic immigrants are not independent units, but are under the supervision and general administration of local, regional, and national mission boards, or of city mission societies, by which they are organized and financed. The leaders of the centers, and in some cases the whole staff, are appointed by these agencies and are, therefore, responsible to them for the conduct of their work. Also, many of the decisions on matters of planning and policy rest with the mission boards or societies.

A mission board or society functions through an especially appointed staff in charge of a superintendent or director. The main tasks of the staff are the collection and administration of funds, the selection and training of personnel, the making of surveys of new fields, the preparation of literature, and the advising and supervising of field workers through periodic visitation of centers and the organization of conferences for the discussion of methods and policies.

Because of the control over mission centers that the administrative officers of the mission boards and societies are able to exercise, a large part of the responsibility for the adequate functioning of the mission enterprise rests upon their leadership. A number of board executives are highly qualified for their task and are able leaders and organizers. The Unit of City and Industrial Work of the Presbyterian Board of National Missions may well serve as an example of the efficiency and high standards of organization that characterize the work of some boards. But not all administrative officers are equal to the responsibility that they have undertaken. Numerous complaints by ministers and social workers were heard that indicated lack of coöperation from headquarters, failure to understand their problems, infrequent and cursory visitations, and curtailment of initiative by wrong policies. Dis-

satisfaction with the administration and supervision of the boards is so pronounced in certain quarters that "foreign-speaking mission pastors are demanding full authority and exclusive superintendence . . . [and] are more and more restless of what we have called 'American supervision.'" [2]

Finance

None of the social centers and practically none of the foreign-language churches among Catholic immigrants are self-supporting. The financing of mission centers is therefore one of the most important tasks that the organizations responsible for the maintenance of mission work have to perform. The funds necessary to cover the current expenses of centers, pay the salaries of workers, and provide for buildings and equipment are furnished in greater part by the national mission boards and by contributions from private individuals, endowments, local American churches and local and regional church organizations, such as synods and presbyteries. The administration of the funds is not centralized, however, and in general, to quote the *Data Book* of the North American Congress, "the operating machinery of home missions is extremely complicated and cumbersome. Interwrought as it is with ecclesiastical organization and procedure it involves much overlapping and is probably to a degree wasteful and inefficient. The complexities involved here suggest one reason why it is so difficult to work out really effective coöperative policies which will carry straight through from a national body to the remotest local field. In hardly any denomination is there a home-mission agency with a sufficiently clear track for the discharge of it."

The question whether home-mission work among immigrants is adequately provided for financially is often raised. There is a sizable group of foreign-language ministers which holds, to quote the statement made at an interdenominational

[2] *Data Book*, N. A. Home Mission Congress, Vol. I, p. 10.

conference of ministers in a discussion on the future of mission work, that "the progress of our work among immigrants is essentially a matter of dollars and cents." This statement implies that the main reason for the existing shortcomings of mission work, particularly so far as its accomplishments are concerned, is the lack of sufficient funds for pushing the work ahead. The validity of this claim appears doubtful, in view of our previous discussion of the obstacles that the mission enterprise among immigrants has to face. It is probably true that the membership might be somewhat larger than it is to-day if more money were available for relief, for the opening of new centers, for the provision of more adequate buildings and equipment, or for higher salaries for leaders. But the realization of the main purpose of mission work, which is to evoke a genuine movement toward Protestantism in immigrant communities, is not a matter of more or less money. For neither opposition of the community, loyalty to the ancestral church nor religious indifference can be changed by making the adoption of the evangelical faith more attractive through a larger expenditure of money.

As matters stand, the amount of money spent on mission work is very large. Complete and accurate statistics to which reference can be made are lacking, but on the basis of the data collected in the field, and derived from published reports, the estimated expenditure of all denominations for mission work among immigrants is between three and four million dollars annually. If we consider that this mission work has been carried on for more than fifty years, and if we include the large investments in church buildings and social centers and in equipment, the total amount of money spent in the mission work so far can be put somewhere between fifty and one hundred million dollars.

To maintain the work on its present scale, the large contributions will have to continue for a long time to come. It is doubtful whether the present high cost will diminish in the

near or distant future, unless a policy of further retrenchment is instituted. The high cost is illustrated by the fact, for example, that the average contribution per church of the Baptist (North) and the Presbyterian (U. S. A.) denominations is about $1,900 a year, and that the average cost for each member in these mission churches amounts to $30. The relation of investment to membership is illustrated by the Latin American Mission, in which the total investment in land, buildings and other property amounts to nearly $500 per member.

The social centers can never be expected to become self-supporting. Church contributions to social work could be decreased if community funds were made available, but this plan has its drawbacks so far as the churches are concerned, for it would necessitate a secularization of the program of social centers, as is demonstrated by cases where support from the Community Chest has been made conditional upon abstention from religious education.

Only a few of the foreign-language churches might, in the course of time, become self-supporting, but no widespread advancement toward self-support can be expected. The foreign-language churches are not self-supporting for two reasons: first, because their membership is too small and, secondly, because most of the members of mission centers belong to the lower-income classes. Any expansion of mission work that would greatly increase the membership is problematical, in view of the fact that no genuine movement toward Protestantism from within the immigrant community itself can be expected. The earning power of the present membership might be expected to increase, for there are indications that length of residence of a national group in this country expresses itself in larger contributions. For example, in the Presbyterian church, which, in comparison with other denominations, obtains the largest contributions from immigrant congregations for the support of its centers, the Mexi-

cans and Poles contribute $700 per church annually and the Italians $1,000, while the Hungarians and Czechs contribute more than $2,000. An increase in earning power sufficient to make the existing churches self-supporting cannot, however, be expected. In this connection it is of interest to note that in each of the churches visited in 1931, half of the congregation, on the average, was found to be unemployed.

Comity

An important step toward the realization of comity is represented by the development of Home Mission Councils in various states, which are associations of administrative representatives of evangelical denominations. They have made possible consultation between denominations on the opening of new centers so as to avoid overchurching. In some cases, they have led to agreements on the allocation of communities to denominations for exclusive fields of responsibility. Some steps toward unification in financial appeals and in the administration of funds have been taken. But very little has been done so far in the unification of programs and policies, and practically nothing that looks toward the elimination of existing competitive situations.

Comity and coöperation among denominations in their work for immigrants are less developed than might be expected under the existing circumstances. In this field, of all others, the opportunity would appear to be favorable, since the problem concerns the evangelization of immigrants rather than the development of a particular denomination. Practically every church has to be subsidized by home-mission aid, with a resulting waste of money when several denominations try to maintain mission centers in the same community. This applies primarily to churches but to some extent it is also true of social centers. Because of the great need for character-building institutions, and the large population in immigrant communities that offers a field for such service, the competi-

tion between social centers operating in the same community is never as pronounced as it is between churches, which have only a limited field of service. On the other hand, if some of these social centers would pool their resources in a coöperative enterprise, they could provide more adequate equipment, a better paid staff and a larger program. Such coöperation would seem to be particularly desirable since social work does not touch directly upon purely denominational interests.

The lack of comity between denominations is usually attributed to the persistence of tradition and vested interests, to historic pride, loyalty to the institution, the conservatism of the church and the fact that the existing competitive system is accepted by most people as normal. There are, however, two additional factors in immigrant work that keep the existing division alive. One is the identification of evangelization with the acceptance of a denominational creed. A Baptist minister was asked why he sponsored the opening of a new church in a neighborhood where two other churches were already operating, each struggling along without self-support and having fifty members between them. He answered: "For two reasons: first, because only Baptists know how to appeal to the foreign-born, and secondly, because they can be considered truly converted and reborn only if they embrace the Baptist faith." This is a fair sample of many similar statements heard in interviews with ministers when the question of interdenominational coöperation was raised.

Another divisive factor encountered in the course of this study is the spirit of rivalry between individual ministers of the same nationality in communities that have churches of different denominations. Each minister considers himself as the only one qualified to work among his countrymen. They accuse each other of incompetence and insincerity, and sometimes even attempt to proselytize the members of another church. Where such rivalry exists, federation of churches or voluntary withdrawal is not easily accomplished.

The difficulty of achieving comity in immigrant work is further illustrated by the fact that even existing agreements for coöperation, particularly in the allotment of exclusive fields of responsibility, are not always kept. Lack of success of a given denomination is used as an excuse to enter an allotted field. Sometimes the introduction of a social program is construed as a violation of the agreement by those who put main emphasis upon religious work, and they justify their entry into an allotted field by expressing a desire to restore to it "evangelistic leadership." Practically every comity arrangement that was encountered in the course of this investigation was found to have been broken at some time or other on such pretexts as these.

Whether circumstances are going to force a change in the direction of greater comity in the future is an open question. Increasing difficulties in supporting existing enterprises would seem to make coöperation imperative in order to preserve what has already been accomplished. But the persistence of particularistic views and the weight of personal ambitions and vested interests must first be overcome before any substantial pooling of resources can be achieved.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions

The preceding discussion has given us the following general picture of mission work among immigrants:

1. The evangelization of Catholic immigrants was undertaken by the Protestant churches in the belief that the ideals and principles of government and social life in America were derived from and supported by the spirit of Protestantism. Evangelization was conceived to be the most adequate means of Americanization, and the best way to retain these ideals and principles, while at the same time safeguarding the supremacy of Protestantism, which was thought to be endangered by the influx of peoples from Catholic countries.

2. Three main approaches are utilized in the pursuit of mission work. First is the religious approach which aims at conversions through preaching the Gospel. This approach is carried on through missions, through foreign-language churches established in different immigrant communities, and through departments of American churches located in the vicinity of such communities. The second approach is through relief work, designed to help the immigrant in making adjustments to his new environment by extending to him material aid, advice and general assistance. This approach has brought many individuals into contact with the Protestant churches who could not have been reached otherwise. The third approach is through the social program, carried on by institutional churches or by centers especially built to provide educational and recreational facilities to immigrants

and their descendants. The social program was adopted primarily to attract young people and to bring them under the influence of the Protestant church.

3. Mission work among immigrants has been carried on for more than fifty years. In the course of this time between fifty and one hundred million dollars have been expended. This sum was contributed to the work by individual churches, church organizations and private individuals. Thousands of immigrants have derived spiritual and other benefits from the mission enterprise, particularly through the assistance they have obtained in making better personal as well as social adjustments, and through participation in the activities of social centers. A better understanding of Protestantism among Catholic immigrants has been achieved. But the mission enterprise has failed to realize the main purpose for which it was instituted. It has failed to accomplish to any significant degree the evangelization of Catholic immigrants and their descendants, and it has not achieved the control that it sought of directing the process of their adaptation to American life. No movement toward Protestantism has taken place as a result of these missionary efforts. There has come under the influence of the Protestant church only an insignificant fraction of the total number of immigrants from the non-Protestant countries of Eastern and Southern Europe and of Latin America, i.e., the Czechs, Hungarians, Italians, Slavs and Mexicans.

4. The failure of mission work to achieve the expected result of a mass movement by Catholic immigrants toward Protestantism is attributable to various factors. The most important of these were found to be: the loyalty of many immigrants to the ancestral church; the predominant concern of most immigrants with the achievement of economic independence, which militated against their taking an interest in religious issues; opposition of the community in consequence

of which a change of religion became an act of disloyalty to the group, endangering the social position of the individual; the inability of the mission, on account of this opposition, to make itself an integral part of the immigrant community; and finally, the difference in cultural background, which prevented immigrants from understanding or accepting the Protestant point of view as to how life should be regulated.

5. The unfavorable conditions offered by immigrant communities limit the possibilities of the expansion of mission work, and under the circumstances only a limited number of individuals can be expected to respond favorably to missionary efforts.

The Future of the Work

Recognition of the nature of the difficulties and obstacles that the mission enterprise has encountered invites the conclusion that only a radical change in prevailing attitudes among Catholic immigrants can give to it greater vitality. If nothing else, this enterprise has again confirmed the observation that a religious movement cannot be imposed upon a group of people from without, but can develop only in response to a vital need for a new form of religion that must be experienced within the group itself. Such a need can arise only as a result of a widespread dissatisfaction with the existing religion, linked with a strong religious interest that will lead individuals to seek new forms in which to express it.

The possibility of an expansion of mission work in the future depends, therefore, upon the chance that a growing dissatisfaction with the Catholic church will develop among immigrants and their descendants. There is no evidence in the present situation that would suggest the probability of such an occurrence on a large scale. In the cases where dissatisfaction with the Catholic church was encountered, it was found to be associated with religious indifference, and there-

fore lacking the incentive for seeking a new form of religious life.

The present status of mission work can be taken as a fair measure of the possibilities of accomplishment, although the limits of expansion may not have been reached in individual instances because inadequate leadership has perhaps prevented the full realization of existing opportunities. But the present status is a precarious one, in view of the fact that practically none of the mission centers is self-supporting. Furthermore, many of the foreign-language churches have outlived their usefulness in view of the restriction in immigration and the failure of these churches to hold the young people. A policy of retrenchment may, therefore, be expected to mark the development of the enterprise in the future. Such a policy has already been inaugurated to some extent with the restriction imposed by mission boards upon the opening of new centers, and the liquidation of centers that were functioning inadequately.

Two ways are open by which the retrenchment can proceed and yet preserve the accomplishments of the work. One is by increased coöperation of denominations, leading to the federation of churches and the unification of support; the other is the gradual incorporation of the congregations of mission centers into American churches. The difficulties of achieving comity and the reluctance of American churches to accept recent immigrants and their children into their midst will make the carrying out of the retrenchment policy an arduous task and one likely to be marked by considerable loss in membership.

There is social justification for a less drastic application of the policy of retrenchment to the social centers. For a long time to come they will serve a useful purpose in underprivileged communities. In fact, the opening of new social centers in communities that have none of their own, the enlargement of the existing ones, to be carried out in close coördina-

tion with other social agencies, a decreasing emphasis upon a specific church program, and intensification of efforts to help the immigrant worker in the struggle for economic security and social recognition suggest themselves as the most constructive items on the future program of mission work.

PART II

What follows is an excerpt from an extensive autobiography written by an Italian minister for the prize contest carried on in connection with this study. Its vivid picture of a mission center in the process of formation is in many aspects typical of the experiences of missionaries in other centers.

It clearly shows the difficulties and obstacles that lie in the path of mission work among immigrants, and reveals the qualities of leadership necessary for achieving even a modicum of success.

CHAPTER VI

The Story of an Immigrant Minister

I HAD been forced to relinquish my appointment in D——, so in the spring I wrote to Dr. S—— asking him to keep me in mind. Several possibilities were offered, but one by one they proved to be impossible. In August we received a telegram asking us to go to N——. I had refused it when it had been offered to me in June. I was eager to get settled and so after discussion decided to wire my acceptance. I was appointed in September, but was advised that because of lack of funds my pastorate would not begin until the following June. To be left with no provision for such a long period was not especially pleasant. I explained that I must have some means of supporting my family in the interim. The first suggestion offered was that I take over the running of a Goodwill Industries Store in N—— until my appointment should begin. I refused because I knew that in so doing I would lose prestige, when my preaching began, with every Italian whom I met while I was in the store. Then it was suggested that I return to school for graduate work and receive a scholarship which would cover our expenses. I accepted this proposition. We decided that it would be wise for us to spend the winter in L——

In March I was asked to go to N—— to visit my future work.

The Italian colony impressed me favorably. There are about 75,000 Italians in the colony. Most of them own their own homes. The majority are business men from northern Italian stock. Many are of the second and third generation

American-born. The section is clean, progressive and attractive. I found that my denomination was the only Protestant group recognized as doing social and religious work in the colony. Our mission is situated in the heart of the Italian district.

When I visited the building I was disappointed in what I found, but was determined not to pass snap judgments. I attended the Sunday school conducted by the deaconesses, but did not observe any of the week-day club work. . . .

When we accepted the position in N—— we believed that a fine institutional church was to be built at once. Although no one told a falsehood, they did fail to explain conditions as they really existed. We knew that three workers were employed. No one told us that they were all to be discharged as soon as we assumed leadership of the work. After we arrived the fact was mentioned to us very casually. The church roll consisted of seventy-six members. I went from one house to another and could not find a trace of most of them. Finally I found one family who said they were members, but who showed no interest in reorganizing a church. Mr. C—— told me that the minister who had preceded me had turned the list over to an Italian Free Lutheran minister and that all the members had either joined that church, drifted back to the Catholic church, or moved to other parts of the city.

The mission building consisted of eight small apartments; two flats and on the first floor two rooms were to be dedicated to church work. The front room had been a store—it was then being used as a kindergarten by the deaconesses. The room which was to be used as a church was the storeroom and had been used as a garage by previous owners. My predecessor had used it as a church, but there were no pulpit, altar or pews. There were two small windows, heavily barred. The walls were dark brown. In one corner, in the front of the room, a toilet had been built in, and near it was a drinking fountain, which the workers explained had been

necessary to meet the requirements for a day nursery which had been in operation at one time. In another corner was a large storage tank for kerosene. There was a kitchen table and a music-stand in the front of the room. The music instrument in use was an old-fashioned organ. My wife and I looked at everything, carefully studied its utter impossibilities, and said nothing. We were both thinking of the things we had been taught in school and wondering how under heaven we could apply such principles to the situation which confronted us.

It was time for Vacation School and so we helped the workers conduct it. The attendance was good and the children were enthusiastic, but it was evident that they had no respect for the place and thought only of what they could get. As soon as Vacation School was over, the workers left and we were alone.

When they were leaving the question came up of equipment. The work had been under the Women's Home Missionary Society. They were withdrawing support and decided to remove all the equipment they had been using. I knew that some misunderstanding existed between this organization and the National Board, but did not know what it was. I did know that if we were left with two empty rooms our problem would be increased a hundredfold. The afternoon the board of the Women's Home Missionary Society met, I asked for permission to speak. I explained to the ladies that I was not working under the leadership of the church, but for Christ and His Kingdom under the leadership of the church; they were not doing the work for me or my superior, but for the glory of God and the uplift of men. After I had finished, they agreed to leave the things as they were and promised to help me in every possible way. They have done everything in their power to help me and I owe to them the large measure of progress I have made because of their financial aid in the various undertakings. One promise I had to

make was that I would not report any gift from them to my superior. I made it because I felt that the good of the work demanded it.

The only equipment we had were several small chairs and tables, some crayons and other occupational work for children, an old piano, some straight chairs, a couple of tables and a stereopticon machine. The front room was heated by the sun and an old gas stove. There were no gas connections in the church room. The first thing I did was to buy gas heaters and have a gas connection put in the church.

I had supposed that there was some means of financing the program. To my amazement I learned that there was no provision made. Our salary was only $1,800 and $30 allowance for house rent. We soon found ourselves dead broke at the end of the month after paying church expenses as well as our own. We had not been at work long when a letter came giving us the list of things we were to raise money for, including "Benevolences and World Service." The first year we were expected to raise about $100 based, of course, on the church-membership reported. We decided to write to Mr. M—— and other friends, asking for help. In a few days Mr. M—— answered and enclosed a check for $100. Other friends sent us smaller checks. We were delighted and told our superior. He told us that the mortgage was due on the building and must be paid at once. He said that the money we had raised would be applied on the building fund. I was furious, but did not dare stand my ground, so he took the money.

The first thing I did after studying the possibilities and handicaps of our own work was to get acquainted with the neighborhood, noting the building-up and tearing-down forces about us. Then I studied the various social agencies which were available for our use. I found that within a radius of five blocks there were over twenty pool-halls and speakeasies. A public dance-hall and two night clubs were close by.

These were largely attended by American people. The smaller boys were in the habit of begging pennies from the people who patronized the cabarets and, while the owners of the cars were away, breaking in and stealing anything in sight. Four houses of prostitution were pointed out to me within the radius of one and a half blocks. To balance these tearing-down influences, I noted two overcrowded municipal playgrounds, a well-organized community house which sponsored a unit of the N—— Boys' Club, three grammar schools, a junior high school, a privately-owned swimming pool, a movie theatre which shows all sorts of uncensored pictures to largely juvenile audiences, and the well-organized Catholic church. Eleven priests are employed. They conduct a school for boys which is fairly well attended, a Boy Scout troop, a boys' club, sewing classes for small girls, and the regular Catholic organizations. On Sunday afternoon they show a popular film with an admission charge of five cents to those who do not attend Benediction and free admission for those who are in attendance. It is interesting to note that after we were successful in conducting a Vacation School, a few weeks later a similar school was started at the Cathedral.

After studying the existing situation, I decided that I must first clean up the church as best I could, place some good pictures on the walls and try to make it look presentable. It was impossible! I was full of enthusiasm and planned attractive posters announcing the services. Sunday after Sunday I would wait for some one to come, but no one appeared. Finally I decided to stop trying to have services for adults until I could do it right and to devote my time to children's work and an educational program.

Our week-day work for children grew. We had clubs for both girls and boys. But when Saturday arrived I would see the nuns going from door to door and the next morning only the most adventurous ones would appear for Sunday school. I soon discovered that the children did not know where we

stood in the matter of religion. Time and again they would come and say, "Mister, they tell us that you are bad, that you are Protestants. That isn't true, is it?" I would answer accordingly and explain that we were called Protestants, not because we do not believe in Jesus, but because we protest against injustice. Such frank statements lost us some children, but the ones who remained knew where we stood. We tried to call at the homes of the children who were attending our clubs. Often we would find that the parents did not know they were attending. Most of them were not interested in us except that through us and our work their children were kept off the streets. I could see that there was no hope of establishing a church through such approaches. I announced that we would have an offering, for I knew that all the children had money to spend. There were fifty-four present. We received eight cents in the collection.

Early in November I decided to start an English school for adults, laying special emphasis on individual instruction and help. I told several of the people we had met about it, and put out signs in both English and Italian. The first evening three women came. They were pleased and so the news spread. The number grew until I was teaching a class of thirty, three nights each week. I tried to get some one to help me and some support for the work, but was unable to do so. There is no problem, in my mind, greater than a class of adults learning English. In my class I had Italians from practically every province in Italy. No two had the same educational background. Some of them could understand English but could neither read nor write in English or Italian. Others could read and write in Italian but did not know a single word in English. Still others could read and write in both languages to some extent. They were all eager to learn and attended regularly. Most of them had been in America ten years or more.

My situation was further complicated by the fact that the

women who had children were forced to bring them to the school. Of course the pupils who did not bring children resented the inevitable disturbance. Some evenings there would be more than ten children in the room from the ages of three to twelve. They would begin to quarrel among themselves and then I would have to stop my lesson to reprimand them. My nerves were beginning to be shattered when the spring term closed. In addition to the evening classes I gave private lessons to those who could neither read nor write in any language. In three months all these ladies were able to read in both English and Italian. They were delighted. Gradually they learned to write. One woman told me, "I feel as though I had been blind and now I can see for the first time in my life."

I never spoke of religion to my class. They became curious at my silence and when class was over began asking me questions as to who employed me and what I believed. I was careful in my replies and did not make them feel that I was trying to change their ways of thinking in any way.

Early in December of our first year I had collected enough money to begin cleaning the church room. I knew that the husband of one of my students was a painter, so I interested him in helping me. After I had removed over two pounds of spikes from the walls, we washed the walls and calcimined them a pale yellow. We painted the woodwork white. In the front of the room were five false windows. They made it impossible for us to obtain an artistic effect, so we bought some dark green burlap and made a curtain background with it. I found some old picture frames and placed the pictures about the room. We had no pews and pulpit furniture, so when I heard that a church in B—— was to be torn down, I interested friends in getting the pews and pulpit for us. They were able to do so. When they were placed, it began to look like a church. Later I was able to get a discarded baptismal font from another church and paint it. We made an altar,

using gilded gas pipes for the altar rail, and hung green burlap curtains around it.

To many Americans all this preparation may seem unnecessary, but when one is dealing with a nation of people who pride themselves upon their beautiful cathedrals and who are accustomed to magnificent churches, no matter how poor they may have been themselves, such things count for much. Throughout my whole work I have adhered closely to the principle taught us in psychology—to begin with the things people know, then by a gradual process to build up and tear down where necessary. Some of the women suggested that we have a party on New Year's Eve. I agreed and we had an evening of games and good times in the social room. They brought refreshments with them. When some one began pouring wine I told him that I was sorry but we could not serve it. I explained the reasons and he good-naturedly put it away. When eleven-thirty came I told them that it was the custom in our family and in our church to greet the New Year with prayer and thanksgiving. I added that anyone was free to go if they did not care to remain with us. Probably out of curiosity, everyone went with us into the church. We sang a song and then one by one we told what things we desired to accomplish in the New Year and what blessings had come to us in the year which was passing. At five minutes of twelve I knelt in prayer and remained kneeling until the whistles stopped blowing. With no further service we went home. The people were all delighted with the service and several said that it was the best New Year's Eve they had ever spent. The next Sunday I announced a service. Several of the people who had attended the party came. I announced regular services. The attendance increased and soon several had formed the habit of coming regularly.

In February my superior came on his first official visit. That evening we had Communion for the first time. I ex-

plained that any one who desired could partake of the Communion. In my sermon I explained the ideals for which our church stands. Then I said that if there was anyone who wished to unite with us I would be happy to receive him. To my surprise eighteen men and women stood and united with us in preparatory relationship.

I must add that only a small number of the women who had attended my class in English have joined our church, but I know that every one of them is a friend of our work and that through them we have gained the confidence of a vast number of people. Many of them attend our services regularly but for reasons known only to them remain Catholic. Others who had ignored all religion are now regular attendants at the Catholic church. One of these ladies was asked why she went to Mass. She replied that I made her do it, for she realized after knowing me that religion was necessary. It may seem strange, but I feel that such a statement as the one uttered by Mrs. B—— is as much a victory for my work as it would be if she had decided to join our church. I have no place in my program for religious antagonism. If I could reconvert all the Italians to the Catholic church, all well and good. However, I know that this is impossible. The large percentage of Italians who claim to be nominal Catholics are in truth agnostic. It is to them that I desire to present the Protestant beliefs. I know that my people need Christ. It is a knowledge of Him and His teachings which I earnestly desire them to obtain.

In the four years we have been in N—— we have never attempted to proselyte from any other religion. The Catholic church mistrusted us and has done many things to try and persuade the people to stop coming to our activities. I could repeat many instances of this, but will let two or three suffice. We had two very fine girls coming to our girls' club. Rose took the part of the Madonna in our Christmas play. The family were neighbors to us and the girls came in and out

every day. They both attended parochial school. One day Rose came to me in tears and said that she could not come to us any more. I asked her the reason. She said that some one had told the Sister in charge of the school that she was attending our classes, and that morning in front of the student body, she had been called on to explain herself. Rose added, "She told me I must choose between you and the school; and you know, I am going to graduate next year. I can't give up school." I assured her that we were not angry. She always speaks to us but has never been inside our church again.

One morning the doorbell rang. I answered it and found two nuns waiting outside. They asked me if our babies had been baptized. I answered in the negative. The older nun began explaining my sin in omitting such a rite. I answered that we were not Catholics and so were waiting to have the children baptized a little later. She was horrified. "What, you are an Italian and not a Catholic?" I assured her that I was all that she had said and a minister as well. (I feel sure that she already knew to whom she was speaking.) She began to argue with me on matters of doctrine. Finally she said, "Why, your religion has no right to exist for it was started by Luther and he was a bad man." "Why," I questioned. "Because he married a Sister," she answered triumphantly. "But I supposed and believed that the best women on earth were within convent walls; certainly Luther could not have chosen more wisely." She changed the subject hurriedly. She accused me of taking the children away from the Catholic faith. I told her that that was untrue for I never went in front of their church telling the children not to enter, but I knew positively that she had done such things to me. After almost three hours' conversation, I began telling her what I really was doing, how I felt and believed. I told her that we could never agree on doctrine, but although we took different roads I felt if we did our best as we believed, we would meet eventually at the Judgment Seat. Finally with

tears in her eyes she said, "I realize that I have misjudged you. Will you pray for us and we will pray for you."

Opposition seemed to die for several months. I learned from reliable sources that following the signing of the "Lateran Pact" the head priest at the Italian cathedral went to the Italian Consul and complained against my activities. He said that I was spreading un-Italian propaganda by preaching the Protestant faith when the Italian religion was Catholic. Fortunately I had been to the Consul some months before and explained to him, in a conversation lasting over half an hour, what my aims and ideals were and what type of work I was doing. He commended me and said that he felt I was rendering a fine service to the Italian colony. Therefore the Consul reprimanded the Reverend Father and told him that if I was gaining ground it was because his church was failing to do its duty.

I also had an attempt at proselyting, directed against my work by the Italian Adventists. They opened a mission on the opposite corner from ours. The minister in charge watched closely to see where our members lived and approached them and invited them to his services. Fortunately our people were all strong enough to resist his arguments. After a few months he closed his mission and went away.

I discovered that many adult Italians had been in N—— from fifteen to twenty years and could speak only a few words of English for they had associated constantly with Italian people. Naturally they have married and raised families. Their children have been educated in American schools and have learned to think in terms of America. The older children of the families have learned to speak the dialect of their parents but, for some reason, the younger children have failed to learn more than a few words. Most of them understand it slightly but cannot answer. Therefore, a very serious family problem arises. The mother cannot talk to the children and as a result they play in the street, going home only

for meals and at bedtime. To create a better understanding within the family we organized an Italian school for children to supplement the English school for adults. It was well attended and flourishing, but lack of help and books made it necessary for us to curtail its activities and enrollment and finally to eliminate it from our program.

Hardly a week passes but some mother, who finds it necessary to go to work, comes and begs us to open a kindergarten for pre-school age children. The mission building was condemned by the Board of Health for day-nursery purposes before we took over the direction of the work. We cannot meet the demand for a kindergarten because we have neither teachers nor money to support it. A kindergarten would put us in touch with a group of young parents whom we cannot come in contact with in any other way.

Although our chapel was clean and respectable there was nothing beautiful about it. I was not satisfied. I felt the need of some kind of an altar. Finally I built one out of some odds and ends of lumber I found. I tried painting it but it did not look right. At about this time my old friend Mr. C—— visited our work and became interested. When he saw the altar I had made he said, "What you need is velvet to drape your altar with." I laughed and answered, "You are right but one needs money to buy velvet, and money is the thing we haven't on hand." He decided to purchase the material himself. His wife, who is very artistic, chose the necessary materials. The ladies of the church were called and we went to work. Our problem had been made easier by having a new door which had formerly been used at the Central —— Church, and by erecting a false partition which hid the windows behind the altar. Mrs. C—— bought a lovely shade of rose velvet for hangings. We regilded the altar rail and painted the exposed parts of the altar in gold. For the middle panel back of the altar we made a wall-hanging by pasting a cut-out picture on velvet. At the windows lavender silk curtains

were hung. A coat of light paint on the floor did wonders. We found two chairs in the basement which had formerly had upholstered seats but which were in a sad state of repair. We re-upholstered them with the velvet and placed one on either side of the altar. Now everything was in keeping except the pulpit, which looked clumsy. By chance I discovered an old-fashioned armchair which, when sawed apart and placed upside down, made an ideal form for a pulpit. I put it together with lath and covered it with velvet. It made an ideal pulpit. We used the burlap, which had been a background, for floor covering for the platform floor. When everything was in place we stood back and sighed in satisfaction, for we had a presentable, beautiful little chapel which created the proper atmosphere of worship.

We placed a series of related pictures on the wall. I had given my wife a copy of Raphael's "Madonna del Gran Duca" as a Christmas gift. We decided to hang it in the church. One of the first questions a Catholic is bound to ask is why the Protestants do not believe in the Virgin Mary. The hanging of the picture answered the question for us because it convinced them that we did believe in the Virgin Mary. Several times we have seen women come in, kneel to the Virgin, and go out again quietly.

Another interesting development in the thinking of our people is the use of candles. We use a candelabrum as part of the decorative scheme. At first the women would light the candles before every service. I said nothing. Gradually, I began preaching of the things Jesus desired from his followers. I said one evening that the best candle we could light was to so love Christ that our hearts and lives would be aflame for Him. After that service the candles were never lighted again. They had come to the realization that candles were unnecessary.

Signor C—— had given a benefit concert for our work when he was in N——. When our chapel was finished he

came and sang for us. An enthusiastic crowd greeted him. Whenever he is in the city he comes to sing for us. We number him as one of the best friends our work possesses, as well as being our personal friend.

When Dr. H—— came from the Home Mission Board in —— he was delighted to see our transformed chapel. He said that to him it was one of the greatest transformations, from a dingy storeroom to a respectable church.

There was a gang of boys from the ages of twelve to sixteen who were the terror of the neighborhood. They damaged property relentlessly and had no respect for anyone except the police, and had respect for them only when they were within sight. They insisted upon playing on the corner near our Center. The deaconesses had placed heavy iron netting on all the windows to protect them. It gave the place such a forbidding appearance that I determined to remove it. I did so, although it meant constant policing to keep baseballs from going through the windows.

The boys had also put a basketball basket up over the church door and were banging on the side of the building from morning until night. When I took it down they took it as a personal insult. I decided that I would try to straighten things out. I had gained the friendship of one of the leaders of the gang. One Saturday morning I told Andrew that I was going to print some snapshots and asked him to help me. I knew that on Saturday the gang would be free. Sure enough when I went to the Center on Saturday they were all at the door waiting for me. I taught them how to print pictures and interested them in forming a club. We were to meet the next Tuesday evening. When the time came they were there and had brought several other boys. They were unmanageable. Finally I got them seated and we elected officers. When the matter of choosing a name arose they decided to call themselves "Mussolini's Wildcats." The number grew until we had a membership of over fifty. With no equip-

ment whatever, I was handicapped. I bought games but in time they grew tired of such tame sport. Gradually the boys began to discipline themselves. Their meetings were orderly; they devised means of punishment for themselves. The most envied position was that of policeman. It was his duty to wash out the mouth of any boy who swore while he was in the meeting. He had plenty to do for the first few weeks.

During the summer we organized a baseball team and practiced at one of the municipal playgrounds. On Saturdays we would go out and play at other playgrounds. I recall one game especially. The boys had received a challenge from a team in another part of the city. Early Saturday morning we started out. When we arrived at the playground we were assigned to a field. Before long a group of boys, all of them at least a head taller than our boys, arrived. They ordered our boys off the field. I intervened and explained that we had been assigned to that place. "What! We play with these little shrimps?" the strangers shouted. After a few minutes they decided to play. At the end of the game the score was 22 to 6 in favor of our team.

As long as I could keep them out-of-doors the problem of holding them together was easy, but when the rainy season came I was at my wits' end to know what to do with them. I appealed for some real equipment, but it was not forthcoming. After eight months of effort I was forced to give it up. I had failed in one way, but the fact that the boys themselves had changed the name of their club to the "Trojan Club" made me feel that it was not an absolute failure. I never had any more trouble with them about creating disturbance and many of the neighbors said they would like to know how I tamed the gang. Now most of them are grown young men. Whenever I see them they greet me cordially and appear like fine, courteous gentlemen.

I have found that one of the best means of coming in contact with the Italians of the educated class is through the

various Italian lodges. I was already a member of the Sons of Italy in America, and of a Masonic Fraternity, and soon after my arrival in N—— I joined the Italian Odd Fellows. I have met many friends in these organizations and have taken part in their celebrations. Several times they have asked me to preside at their functions as speaker of the day. I was chosen by the Sons of Italy to act as their representative at the fifty-four Italian organizations in N——. They elected me chairman of the political committee at the time of the campaign for governor. However, I felt it unwise to accept.

Trouble arose in the Italian Odd Fellows' Lodge and some of the leaders organized an independent lodge called the Italian Moderna Social Club. When it came time for them to formulate a ritual one of my friends, who is a leader in the organization, asked me to write a burial service. His only stipulation was that the name of God should not be mentioned. He said that some members would object because they did not believe in religion. I had to scratch my head to think of a means of accomplishing the results I desired without mentioning God, but finally did so and substituted "Omnipotent One" and the "Most High." To my inward amusement they accepted the service enthusiastically. Lately I preached over the radio. I received a fine letter from the Lodge saying how much they enjoyed my sermon and saying that it was the unanimous opinion of the members that such programs should be continued.

I have gained only a few members for my church through these contacts but I feel that they have been eminently worth while for the future of my work in N——. First, I have gained their respect, second, their sympathy, and third, their conception of Protestants has been changed. I think I know Italian psychology well enough to know that it would be futile for me to press them to attend my services at present. To the Italian mind a church must be beautiful, worshipful, and in a proper setting. I did invite a few of them to come.

After the service one of them remarked, "What type of a Lodge is this anyway? The hall is so peculiar." I decided then that I could never reach this class until I had some church to offer other than a transformed garage. When the time comes that we have a respectable church building I shall invite them to come as a Lodge and later as individuals. I feel positive that a goodly number will become interested and be willing to support our program.

Doubtless many people would disagree with me in this matter. I might not pursue the same course in another given situation, but after four years of study and observation I am convinced that N—— demands it. The Italian Catholic church is the pride of the colony even though the large percentage of Italians do not attend regularly. How can we honestly expect people to come to us for baptisms, weddings, and funerals when we have nothing but a dingy room to offer them in contrast to a church of cathedral proportions? The argument might be that to "true followers" the appearance of the church is not of major importance. In some cases this may be true, but I am thinking especially of the new people with whom we come in contact. Say all you please about the Catholic church; but we must admit that we have much to learn from them in the splendid attention they give to the housing of their places of worship. The background of the Italian people demands it.

Another prime essential of successful work among foreign people is, I believe, a close connection between the mission church and the American Protestant churches of the community. We were very fortunate to secure the coöperation of a young minister and his wife who knew the situation and who were ready and able to aid us get contacts with the proper sources. Through them we were able to interest the Epworth League Alliance of the city in helping us with supplies and frequent parties for the children and in providing a Christmas entertainment and party. I spoke in every Ep-

worth League in the city the first year we were in N——. They have been ready to help us whenever we have asked them and it is because of their coöperation that we have been able to strengthen and build up our program.

The people in the American churches have been very cordial. I have spoken at their services on many occasions and feel that they are interested in the things I am trying to do. This cordiality is a satisfaction to me personally, but I do not feel that it is enough to make for the advancement of the Italian mission work. Some definite program should be formulated which would make provision for a forward-looking program. The question remains, how can this be accomplished? A day-to-day program, such as I am forced to carry on, cannot hope to bear constructive results. Whenever my work has grown to such proportions that I need additional means and the help of teachers and trained workers I have been told to cut down my program and do less. In some instances volunteer workers have done heroic work in the mission churches. I have not had that experience in N——. Some have started with enthusiasm and have started good work, but the call has been greater elsewhere, and unhampered by a sense of responsibility they have soon lost the enthusiasm and have caused us more annoyance than anything else.

We had not been in N—— very long when the father of some of the children in our Sunday school was killed. We had called in the home but did not know the family well. The father was a fisherman. He left the mother, two boys of ten and eight years, a daughter who was partially crippled and feeble-minded, and matters were further complicated by an expected baby. I knew that the family was Catholic, so did not interfere. After several days we went to call. The woman was broken-hearted. As far as money was concerned, she was being well taken care of by the Red Cross and other social agencies. I told her that I had waited before calling to give the Sisters a chance to help her. She began to weep and

said that no one had come. After a long talk she felt reconciled to the circumstances. Although she has never joined our church I know that she is a supporter of the work through her words to other friends who may speak ill of us. I feel sure that some day she will join the church, but it is my policy never to force church-membership upon anyone. I feel that such a step is entirely a personal matter.

One Sunday morning a man of about forty came to the Sunday school bringing a child of four. He said that he was a Protestant, and a widower. The baby came to Sunday school a few times and then for two or three weeks I did not see them again. One day I was walking along the street and saw Mr. M—— with his face bandaged and looking like a ghost. He told me that the day before he and the baby had been in an automobile accident and that little Mary had been killed. He had made arrangements to hold her funeral at the Catholic church. I bought flowers, went to the funeral and consoled him. A few days later he came asking me to help him collect insurance and indemnity for the baby's death. He had already engaged a lawyer, so I went with him almost every day for two months to interpret, for he could speak only a few words of English. After three months the case was settled and he decided to go to Italy. He had been in Italy only a few weeks when he wrote that he had decided to get married again and had to secure a death certificate for his first wife, to prove that he was free to remarry. I sent it to him. In a few weeks he wrote that the Italian authorities would not accept it for she had given a false maiden name to her husband in order to cover up family irregularities. It was complicated by many difficulties but eventually Mr. M—— was able to marry again. He remained in Italy.

Not long afterward some acquaintances of Mr. M——'s came to me for help. They were all Catholics. Frank R—— had entered the United States illegally as an Italian seaman, and had been apprehended by immigration officials. He was

scheduled to be deported and was being held at the deportation station. I went to see him and succeeded in having him released on bond. We went to the same lawyer who had handled Mr. M——'s case, for consultation. He thought that he would be able to obtain Frank's release. The case came up in court. I acted as interpreter on several occasions. The case dragged on. Frank's funds were exhausted, so finally he decided to submit to deportation. While I was visiting him I came in contact with several other Italians awaiting deportation. I helped them in various ways. There were no books written in Italian in the library. I pursuaded the editor of one of the Italian newspapers to send his paper free of charge so that the men could have some reading material. We have kept in touch with the social workers at the Island and have been able to do favors for the Italian deportees on several occasions.

One evening we were having a meeting at the Center when we saw what looked like smoke coming from under the basement door. I investigated and knew that it was not smoke but steam from a still. For a moment I did not know what to do. Then I decided to call the firemen. The firemen came, and upon investigation found a two-hundred-gallon still going full blast in the basement of one of the tenants. They demanded to know who rented the cellar. I knew but decided that it was not my business to report and told them that a certain real-estate company had charge of renting the building. Further investigation revealed that the gas being used by the bootleggers was being stolen from the meter at the church. Although I reported to the church authorities and to the Anti-Saloon League, nothing was done. Sixteen barrels of wine and cases of liquors were left and carried away by people of the neighborhood. The police came to me to investigate. They knew that I was aware of the owner's name but did not force me to give it. Nothing was ever done about the whole affair. I knew that if I re-

ported the owner my work would be ruined, for every one would consider me a spy. Later the man who owned the still came and paid me for the gas he had used. He left the city and so the matter was closed.

Later one of the apartments was rented by a Portuguese who is an avowed bootlegger. He carries on his business openly. Many times men and women dead drunk fall down the stairs from his apartment, which is directly above our social hall. I have reported the matter again and again, for I feel that I cannot consistently preach against alcohol when sometimes the fumes from the wine, fermenting in the cellars beneath the church, are so strong that I must air out the room before we can begin our service.

Not long ago a call came from a man who said he was connected with the Prohibition Service. He asked me for an interview. When I went to his office he explained that the government was anxious to apprehend several big Italian bootleggers and needed some one to translate their conversations over the telephone. He explained it all at great length and then said, "And now how much time could you give us, and what would be your price?" He was amazed when I told him that I was not at all interested in his proposition. I told him that I could never face the Italian people and preach the Gospel when on other occasions I was spying on them and indirectly sending men to prison. I feel that no missionary should mix up in such things even though the cause may be good. I believe in Prohibition whole-heartedly but I could not conscientiously spy on my countrymen or any men and at the same time preach the Gospel.

This problem has given me much thought. I wonder if I should continue to work under such conditions. American friends argue that the Italians are at fault. They all have wine, it is true. I admit that fact, but I do maintain that as a church we are losing prestige by fighting for Prohibition in a big way and then countenancing its manufacture and sale

within our own property no matter how unimportant that property may be. Many Italians think of the Protestants in terms of my denomination. They blame it for Prohibition and at the same time they see these flagrant misdemeanors against the law. I am at a loss to explain things to them. I have placed the matter before many church leaders in the city. They all agree that it should not exist and yet, as one layman told me, "We need the rent which that man is paying; what can we do?"

One day Mr. and Mrs. B—— and their baby son came to our home. They told us that they had been sent by friends. They were destitute and told us the following story. Mrs. B—— was a graduate of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Florence. She had come to America with the Florentine Choir to tour the United States. The Choir had been disbanded and although she had only a visitor's permit she decided to marry one of her countrymen and remain in America. By such a marriage she believed that she would be safe and within the law since Mr. B—— was a naturalized citizen. They were married and ten months later a baby son was born. When the baby was only a month old her case came to the attention of immigration authorities and she was ordered deported. She fought the case and, since her baby was an American citizen, she was finally told that she could go to V——, remain there a stated length of time, and then return to the United States legally as an immigrant. They did so and in moving her husband lost his position as bricklayer. When they returned he tried to find work but could find nothing. They had no money; the baby was crying for milk. They said that they had been to the Catholic church but could get nothing. I asked one of the large Protestant churches for immediate relief. In the meantime I found a job for the man. He had only been working a few days when he fell and was injured seriously. I interpreted for him at the hearing for compensation insurance. Family misun-

derstanding caused dissension and secretly both the husband and the wife came to me with their story. I listened and finally brought them to an understanding.

A few weeks ago Mrs. B—— said, "I do not believe in any religion, but if anything should happen to me I want you to promise that you will preach at my funeral and bury me." She has also given her services freely to our church and has gone out to sing for us on many occasions.

One day a man came to the house and asked me if I could give him private lessons in English so he could get his second papers. Pietro was a man of about forty. He worked as second cook in a cabaret. He was as good as gold, but his head was so hard that it was almost impossible for him to learn. He came every morning for weeks. He would try over and over again to read a passage but would make dozens of mistakes. He always called me Maestro. When he went to take his examination I expected that he would fail. However, about noon Pietro appeared at the door with a big box of Italian candy. "Maestro, how can I thank you for making me an American," he said. A few days later he came to me in tears and said that his brother was dead. He was having the funeral at the Catholic church, but asked me if I would not go to the cemetery and say a few words at his brother's grave. I went and spoke to the assembled friends. The next morning Pietro came with a letter he had written to his mother in Italy. He said, "Maestro, I wrote this letter before I heard you speak. I want to change it now and write in such a way that my mother will not be hurt too much by the news." I helped him revise the letter. Whenever I see him he asks for my advice and thanks me again for teaching him.

A case of quite another nature came to our attention a few months ago. I had met Mr. R—— in one of the Italian lodges. He asked me if he might see me privately. He told me that his brother-in-law was in prison in V——. He had killed a

man in self-defense. He had been sentenced to prison for five years. According to law the man himself could not ask for grace but his relatives could. Mr. R—— wanted me to write a letter to the Minister of Justice asking him for clemency. The case is still pending. Mr. R—— has been a steady attendant at our religious services but I have never urged him to come.

Another old man came to me for help who claimed that he was a poet. He had written a drama on World Peace. The work did have elements of cleverness and was written in the style of the old troubadours. The grammatical errors were so numerous that to try and correct them would have been an impossible task. Day after day he came and repeated his poems to me. I heard his rhymes so many times that I could almost repeat them word for word. My illness interrupted his visits and I have never seen him again.

One evening a man came to the church asking me to help him secure work. He procured credentials to prove that he belonged to the family of Pope Pius IX. I found work for him and he wrote a letter of thanks addressing me as Most Reverend Father——. He thought that such a title would flatter me. I said nothing for I thought that I deserved such a title since I was the father of twins. I advised him to go to the Catholic church, but he said that he had been there and they could do nothing.

Mrs. F—— is the wife of one of the friends I met in an Italian lodge. Her husband has known me for over two years. About a year ago he came to visit me and asked us to call. A few months ago she came with a story of family misunderstanding and difficulty. She has a son by a previous marriage. He and the stepfather do not agree. Finally the father sent him out of the house. The mother had noticed that her husband listened to my advice and came asking me to approach her husband without mentioning her intervention and persuade him to allow the boy to return to the

house. It was a very delicate problem. I spoke to the husband and he agreed to allow his stepson to return. He also asked me to allow his other children to come to Sunday school and Epworth League where they could receive religious instruction. His wife told me that he was deadly opposed to religion in any form.

Since this depression we have had one call after another for help. Many of the men who have come have been worthy, but with no funds we have been forced to turn most of them away. I have given from my own pocket many times, but since our pay has been cut 15 per cent I cannot continue it. On the windows of the social hall are written the words "FRIENDLY CENTER." One man said to me when I was forced to turn him away, "How dare you put those words on your windows when you cannot live up to them?" I had to admit in my own mind that he had reason to criticize.

One evening a young man of twenty-six came to the church. He said that he was cold and hungry, had been sleeping out in parks for weeks. He showed me letters from his family in Florence and his passport which showed that he was American-born but had returned to Italy when only a child. He told me his story. As he was my size I gave him some of my clothing and a pair of shoes. I was able to find a place for him at one of the Shelters and through a member of our church, who owned a restaurant, to secure one meal for him each day. Later the Shelter was closed and, after he stayed at our house a few weeks, I arranged for him to sleep in one of the empty apartments in the mission building, where he is staying now. He is ambitious and willing to work. He is only one of many, but it is impossible for us to do more.

A month or so ago one of the boys in our Epworth League came and asked me to help his friend Sammie who had been arrested. I had met Sam and liked him but did not know his family. He was a lad of twenty-two, quiet and gentle-

manly. He was a fisherman. I learned upon investigation that Sammie had been in a Spanish dancing hall the previous week. Some one had tripped a couple. As Sammie was standing near, one of the men accused him. He denied the accusation. A special policeman entered the discussion and tried to disgrace Sammie before every one. He answered hotly. The policeman raised his club to strike and Sammie knocked him down. The policeman arrested him. Sam spent the night in jail and was released on bail. The trial was called for the following Saturday. I went to the court. The police judge gave the boy a good lecture. His father could not speak English, so I interpreted the judge's words to him. I asked the judge to give me a chance with the boy. He agreed and gave Sam a suspended sentence, placing him under my care. Every Wednesday Sammie reports and when he says, "O.K., Mister," I know that he has done as he should the previous week.

We write many letters for different people; some of them are members of our church but the great majority are not. They come to us upon the recommendation of some one we have helped previously. This last month I have interpreted at three trials, been to the lawyer with four others, and to the doctor with as many more. Of course this number does not seem large but I know that it does mean many new contacts for us eventually.

Of course everything is not perfect by any means. Sometimes I wonder if after all the sacrifice of health, money and time, it is worth while; but always I come to the conclusion that it is worth it all.

In May I began to feel the effect of overwork and worry. A recurrence of my old trouble appeared. I had a slight hemorrhage and was ordered to bed. I stayed in bed for six weeks. In the month of June our diary shows over one hundred calls made by our friends. I was living in the midst of the work and so could not get it out of my mind. My wife

conducted Vacation School that summer with the help of three girls from an American church. The results were gratifying. The doctor advised us to go to the country for a month. I gained and felt stronger than I had in years. When we returned from the country we decided that we must find a place farther away from the work. It had gotten so that people were in the house from morning until midnight. Often the doorbell would ring at six-thirty and we would find some one asking for something. We had not time to relax. We found a desirable place in P—— and moved there early in September.

I began working again from morning until late evening. Many times I would not stop for lunch, and to save a nickel street-car fare would walk ten or fifteen blocks. A woman doctor desired to open a clinic at the Center and that meant extra work for me. By the first of October I was beginning to feel exhausted again. The evening of October first I returned to the house late. Suddenly I felt something snap and knew that I was going to have another hemorrhage. I had three hemorrhages within the next two days. Our doctor from N—— came to see me and said that only one course was open to me—a complete rest for one year. In some way I contracted a cold following the hemorrhages and this developed into pneumonia. My doctor advised hospital care. Through my war service I was entitled to hospitalization at the government hospital in N——, so was moved there. I remained three days. I was not receiving the care that the doctor deemed advisable so through the kindness of my superior was transferred to a private hospital and placed under the care of my own doctor. I was in the hospital about six weeks. For a time it looked dubious whether I would get well again, but gradually I regained my strength. When I was able to be moved I was sent home in the ambulance and was put to bed. Until the next May I did not even attempt to stand although I gained steadily. By July I was able to be

outdoors again. I had gained over twenty pounds and felt better than I had in years. The first of September the doctor said I was ready to begin work again. I have been working almost a year now and although I must be careful I am able to do my work and keep strong.

I learned many things during those ten months of enforced rest. First, I was made to realize the blessing of health and the penalty of abusing that gift. Second, I came to realize that many of the things I had thought were important were non-essential and that the world goes on just the same when one man is forced to step out. Again, I discovered that I could not do everything alone and that people would like me just as well if I did not try to do everything. Lastly, I learned to put my faith in God and to pray believing absolutely in His promises.

I had a radio by my bedside and through it I kept in touch with the outside world and went to school again through the many lectures, the inspiring music, and the diversity of entertainment it offered me. I was able to read books which I had been intending to read for years but had never had time. I kept a little notebook beside me and often worked out speeches and sermons for future use.

Naturally the hours dragged at times, but I do feel that it was a period of rejuvenation for me in both mind and body. My wife carried on the social work in my absence and an American minister who spoke Italian preached for me. When I returned I found the people contented and happy, ready to coöperate with me again in carrying on the program of the church.

Recently we organized a discussion group for young people over the age of twelve. The response has been surprising; the young people are very enthusiastic and have entered into the spirit of the organization surprisingly well. The group is not large, only twenty members, but it is growing steadily. To one unacquainted it does not seem like a vic-

tory. But to us it is, because in N——, as in no other place where I have ever observed the work, the customs of Italy are retained. As soon as a girl reaches the age of twelve she must stay in the house and not go outside her own dooryard. She must not mingle with the boys or young men. Only when the parents place perfect confidence in her chaperons is she allowed to go out, especially after dark. Therefore, for every member of our League we must first gain this confidence of the entire family. The ridiculous part of the above custom to us is that these same girls go to school and later to work unchaperoned. We are trying to develop a fourfold program in this organization and to develop leaders. We use the discussion method almost entirely in our meetings. Some of the subjects discussed are: "Is It Ever Fair to Cheat?" "What Kind of Friend Shall I Choose?" "What Kind of Books Shall We Read?" "What Are the Characteristics of a Good Citizen?" "Should We Study the Bible?" "What Are the Beliefs of Other Religions and Is Christianity Better?" The ensuing discussions are often heated ones, but most of the conclusions drawn are valid and sensible ones.

Several families who were interested in our work held back because they did not want to stop the custom of confirmation for their children. Confirmation is an event in the life of an Italian child. A godmother or godfather is chosen, new clothes are the order of the day, and a big party with gifts and a photograph are thrills for the child. Several mothers asked me if our church believed in confirmation. I said, "Yes, we do." I knew that the custom is not practiced by many Protestant churches. We organized a catechism class. After several weeks the members, all boys and girls of about twelve, could have put many older church-members to shame by their knowledge of church doctrine. I made sure by careful examination that the children understood the things they had learned. They were confirmed on Holy Thursday.

Many people who live out of N—— have visited our work

with friends and expressed the desire to hear one of our services over the radio. A small fund was available at Easter, so we decided to broadcast our Easter service. Through an acquaintance, who is the Italian Program Director of one of the broadcasting companies, I was able to obtain rates. We broadcasted from nine to nine-thirty on Easter morning. Our girls' choir, led by Mrs. B——, sang appropriate hymns, and I gave a simple Easter message. The response was very gratifying and surprising. Letters came from many parts of the state asking that we continue the broadcasts. Of course it is impossible for us to do so for we have no available funds. I do feel that such programs would fill a definite need in the Italian evangelical work.

We realize the need of a Vacation School this summer, but fear that we shall be forced to abandon our plans because of lack of funds. We spent only twenty-five dollars for our last school. We taught over one hundred children for a period of four weeks. At our Vacation School we stress citizenship and fair play rather than religious memory work as many schools do. We do teach the Bible but use it in connection with the foregoing theme. Last year we could not hold a school. To our surprise, on the morning when it began the previous summers, over fifty children were waiting outside the door.

When I speak of failure because of lack of funds I do not in any way desire to condemn my church. I realize how hard-pressed the church is and how impossible it is for my superior to supply me with a budget. However, I do believe that the church should adopt some definite policy of control of such work and supply the pastor with enough financial help to carry on a constructive program. Working under the existing conditions, I am expending energy and the church is spending money without gaining the maximum of results. Work such as ours should have the assurance of a steadily increasing program for at least ten years ahead. It is an injus-

tice to the members of the Italian congregation to have it otherwise.

Such statements naturally bring the question of self-support to mind. I believe in urging self-support when the church is able to give something to the members, but when they are receiving no special help or instruction I believe that a free-will offering only should be expected. We do not pass the collection plate but leave the plate near the altar. Unless the members are out of work and financially unable to give, they all place some offering unasked. At Christmas and Easter we leave offering envelopes in a conspicuous place and they always take one and place some extra money in it.

One of the mistakes of the church in previous years has been to hand out clothing, food, and other things too liberally. It has pauperized the Italians and led them to think that they can expect help whether or not such help is necessary. At first we were besieged for all sorts of things, but we adopted the policy of never giving anything unless we knew that the recipient was actually in need. We never give children gifts of any sort unless they have earned them. Slowly we are overcoming the false idea that all Protestants are rich and buy their members.

Since my return to the work we have been carrying on a program which is as far-reaching as our limited means allow. We realize that a social service program necessarily demands a budget for supplies and materials. Therefore we have confined ourselves to a strictly religious program in so far as the organizations are concerned. However, I do not mean that the program has narrowed in any way. I do not like slogans, but if I were to choose one it would be "Americanization Through Christianization." I do not believe that the Italian who is unmindful of the welfare of his fellowmen is as good a citizen as the one who has the welfare of others at heart. For this reason I hold that the best type of social-service work is that which stands shoulder to shoulder with modern

church training. Emotional hysteria has no place in my program. I aim to give to my people a true conception of the social gospel of Jesus as far as I am able. His principles and His teachings are the ideals which I desire them to follow and exemplify in their relations with each other.

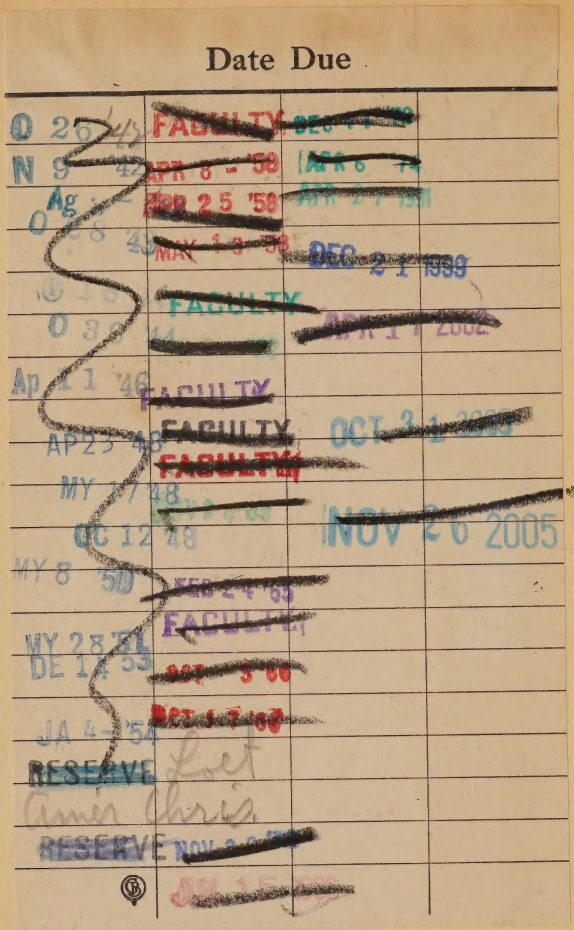
My own experience and that of many of my friends has led me to the conviction that such moral and religious standards are not found in the lives of the Italians who are unchurched or who have no interest in the Roman Catholic church. For this reason I believe that there is a place in every Italian colony for an evangelical church. But no church can do its duty unless it ministers to all men, regardless of race or creed, to the fullest extent in whatever need may arise. It must fulfil a twofold purpose. First, it must instruct men in right living according to Christian principles, and second, it must minister to the physical and intellectual needs of its followers and all with whom it comes into contact whenever occasion demands it.

Sometimes I am overcome with discouragement. The sacrifice in health and in financial return seems too great. But always I come to the conclusion that I must carry on. The need is so great that I know wherever I might be and whatever I might do my heart would be in the Italian work.

My contribution may be a small one, but I love America, and loving her I feel that I can best serve her by helping my fellowmen to become the kind of citizens of which America will be proud. Italy has given to the world many illustrious names and has contributed largely to civilization. Possibly among the little Mikes and Rosies we are loving and leading will be other great minds which will bring honor and glory to the land adopted by their fathers and by me.

I can think of no better way to end this simple chronicle of my life than by saying with the Apostle Paul, "Not that I have already obtained the prize or that I have arrived at perfection; but I continue to carry on in the hope to gain such a

prize, because I also have been grasped by Jesus Christ. Brethren, know, I do not repute myself to have yet received the prize; but one thing I do: forgetting that which is behind and pressing toward that which is before me I continue to run toward the mark, in order to obtain the prize of the high calling which I have received from God, through Jesus Christ."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